

Designing Paris

*The Architecture of Duban,
Labrouste, Duc, and Vaudoyer*

David Van Zanten





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*In memory of Ann
and for Clara*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book grew out of my experiences in Paris in 1968–69 as a Fulbright scholar from Harvard completing my doctoral dissertation, “The Architectural Polychromy of the 1830’s.” That topic was only tangentially French, and my choice of Paris as a place to pursue it was essentially practical, but once there that extraordinary city and its social and architectural tradition impressed itself forcefully upon my mind. French nineteenth-century architecture became the subject of my research for the next eighteen years.

I had been prepared for Paris by my undergraduate advisor at Princeton, Donald Drew Egbert, the first American historian of Beaux-Arts architecture, and by my uncle, Theodore Young, an architect who was once a designer for John Russell Pope. They had always assumed that France was the center of things.

In Paris I met Neil Levine, now a professor at Harvard and then a fellow Fulbright scholar. He was in Paris to study French modern architecture in general and the extraordinary work of the mid-nineteenth-century designer Henri Labrouste in particular. I was already exploring the work of Labrouste’s generation, that of 1830, but it was through Levine that I perceived the real complexity and beauty of the subject. He made me especially aware of Labrouste and his close friends Félix Duban, Louis Duc, and Léon Vaudoyer and showed me how subtle, complex, and revolutionary were their conceptions of historicism and rationalism. He made it clear that the turn-of-the-century classical Beaux-Arts tradition at its origin in these men’s work was something different and more profound than had been previously pictured. I owe him an incalculable debt: this volume exists because of his ideas, insights, and example.

During that illuminating year in Paris I met the first of a number of European scholars who have been unstintingly kind and helpful: Marcel Brion, advisor to the Fulbright scholars in art history; Mme. Bouleau-Rabaud, then librarian of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and her able assistant (and soon her successor), Annie Jacques; Jacques Dupont; Karl Hammer; Bruno Foucart; Françoise Bercé; Michel Gallet. I owe them thanks for favors and suggestions of all sorts over the years.

After 1969 I continued my research, focusing increasingly on mid-nineteenth-century France. Mme. Hautecoeur, librarian of the Institut de France, kindly placed me in contact with the Vaudoyer family in its several branches. They were helpful and kind in permitting me to study the drawings and letters of their ancestor and in answering my questions and guiding my research. I express to them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

In 1971 I began teaching at the University of Pennsylvania. There I was lucky to be near Frank Bowman, with his vast knowledge of nineteenth-century France. During eight years in Philadelphia I had three graduate students working in the field of French architecture from whom I learned a great deal: Robert Brueggemann, pursuing French eighteenth- and nineteenth-century hospital design; Christopher Mead, studying Garnier's Opera; and Ann Lorenz (who finished as a student of Levine at Harvard), working on César Daly and the *Revue générale de l'architecture*.

I married Ann and worked with her and depended upon her in many ways before she was killed on the rue des Rosiers in 1982. This book was a common project; it is dedicated to her memory.

While at Penn I also met several European architecture students in Louis Kahn's atelier who became fine friends and helpers in this research: Marina and Christian Devillers, David Elalouf, and Cornelis van de Ven.

During the year 1974–75 I worked with Ann as well as with Neil Levine and Richard Chafee under Arthur Drexler's direction on the exhibition *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, which opened in October 1975 at the Museum of Modern Art. We all learned a great deal from each other. We were aided wonderfully by Annie Jacques at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (together with her assistants Annie Vallantin and Michelle Bacou), as well as by the Labrouste family and by Martine Kahane, librarian of the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra. Other kind friends were made at this time, among them Gérard Rousset-Charny, Robin Middleton, and Joseph Rykwert.

In 1976–77 Ann and I contributed to the exhibition *The Second Empire: Art in France Under Napoleon III*, conceived by Kathryn Hiesinger and Joseph Rishel of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Again we learned from working together and with our French colleagues, particularly Geneviève Monnier at the Louvre and Bruno Foucart. Our circle of Parisian friends was enlarged as we made the acquaintance of Mme. Thérèse de Puylaroque and Mme. Marie-Noële de Gary. This experience made me aware that after their first works during the Monarchy of July, Labrouste and his contemporaries produced even finer achievements with their great monuments of the Second Empire, Vaudoyer's Marseilles Cathedral, Duc's Palais de Justice, and Labrouste's Bibliothèque Nationale.

It was only after the opening of the Second Empire exhibition in September 1978 and my contemporaneous move to Chicago to teach at Northwestern University that I commenced definitive work on the manuscript that follows. It is based on the documentation that I had assembled during the previous ten years and synthesizes much of my earlier work, but it is reformulated to respond to the perspective of professional context. Ann and I had become increasingly conscious of how profoundly architecture is beholden to the conceptual and technical means invented for its

execution. The bigger the project was, the more elaborate these means—and France around 1850 (as well as Chicago around 1900) provided one of the most remarkable demonstrations of architectural organization in Western civilization. We not only became sensitive to all the procedures and tools developed to do so much work so well, but also started to explore how the architects themselves reacted to their social and professional situation, how they tried to make some small space for personal, speculative art. The first expression of our enterprise was Ann's essay "John Lloyd Wright," published in 1982, immediately before her death.

In carrying this volume to completion I have enjoyed the kindness of many other friends, especially Marthe Bernus and François Durand and his family in Paris. I have also profited tremendously from discussions with and advice from many younger scholars: Meredith Shedd and Michael Driskel, Katherine Taylor, Barry Bergdoll, Susan Siegfried, Anne Wagner, Richard Etlin. I have come to owe a great deal to several colleagues at Northwestern far more knowledgeable than I in the matter of the social history of art, especially Karl Werckmeister, Marco Diani, and Hollis Clayson. I have also learned a great deal from my graduate students, especially Tom Rowlands, working on Quatremère de Quincy; Sharon Irish, examining the professional situation of the Beaux-Arts architect Cass Gilbert; John Stamper, elucidating Chicago real estate development; and Steven Moyano, exploring Schinkel's work as Prussian Oberbaudirektor during the 1830s.

I also acknowledge, with warmest appreciation, a 1977 summer stipend from the National Endowment for the Humanities and especially a large research grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, which made my research possible. The University of Pennsylvania contributed six months' leave, at half salary, and Northwestern a year's leave on the same terms.

Having written a manuscript, of course, the problem has been to make it a book, and here I have been kindly aided by Susan Lorenz, who provided time to travel and write; by Christopher Mead, Richard Etlin, Fannia Weingartner, and Danielle Pickard, who read the manuscript and gave editorial advice; and by Pat Persaud, who produced a beautiful typescript.

Last, but by no means least, I owe thanks to my daughter, Clara, who has been patient these last four years, who cheered me up and left me alone when the manuscript seemed too long and too unwieldy to ever be transformed into the volume the reader now holds.

INTRODUCTION

Around the year 1830 there emerged in Paris a group of architects who studied the history of architecture with a new, precise method of spatial and structural analysis. This permitted them to grasp the subject in terms of its organic principles and thus to be at home with history and not be controlled by its forms. Their method permitted them to project new buildings freely, in terms of their functions and meanings, and to create relieved ornamented surfaces of exquisite freedom and effect. Their emergence brought about a revolution in French architecture. Great opportunities were offered them by the development of Paris, first, tentatively, during the Monarchy of July of Louis Philippe between 1830 and 1848, then pell-mell and splendidly during the Second Empire of Napoleon III, proclaimed in 1852 and overthrown in 1870. They rose to this occasion. They, their students, and their successors largely produced the Paris of the mid-nineteenth century as well as the so-called Beaux-Arts system of training and design that eventually emerged from it. After 1870 the architects of the world flocked to Paris to imbibe this system and went home to create little Paris's all over the earth.

The leaders of this group were four friends: Félix Duban (1796–1871),¹ Henri Labrouste (1801–75),² Louis Duc (1802–79),³ and Léon Vaudoyer (1803–72).⁴ They were always seen as a group. They had won the Grand Prix de Rome in four successive years (1823–26) and had consequently studied together as *pensionnaires* at the French Academy in Rome, where they joined their sympathetic predecessors Abel Blouet and Emile Gilbert. The four returned to Paris around 1830 to lead the Romantic movement in architecture during the Monarchy of July. These Romantic *pensionnaires* went on to become the old masters of Second Empire architecture, producing three of its most impressive monuments: Vaudoyer's Marseilles Cathedral, Duc's Palais de Justice on the Ile de la Cité, and Labrouste's Bibliothèque Nationale. Three younger men also emerged during the Second Empire—Hector Lefuel, with his New Louvre; Charles Garnier, with his Opera; and Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, with his campaign of medieval restoration—but they were individualists responding to the coordinated impetus of the Romantic *pensionnaires*. Both Garnier and Viollet-le-Duc claimed to be carrying on their enterprise, with Garnier claiming Duban and Duc as his precursors and Viollet-le-Duc citing Labrouste.

It is the work of the first four—its principles, its innovations, the professional reorganization that accompanied its emergence, and the complexity and subtlety of its architectural products—that is the subject of this book.

The participants in and descendants of the Beaux-Arts tradition always dated the definitive formulation of their system to the *pensionnaires'* return to Paris. In 1863, in the essays on architecture that were to constitute part of his *Grammaire des arts du dessin*, the editor, artist, and critic Charles Blanc noted enthusiastically:

*How can one now despair of our architecture when one remembers that knowledge of the exemplary models is very recent and that the real Renaissance dates from only thirty years ago? Guided by penetrating study and criticism, possessing all the necessary tools, our school today has before it the most promising future.*⁵

Again, and more specifically, in 1889 the architect Lucien Magne wrote in his *L'Architecture française du siècle*:

*Reason and truth finally penetrated into the domain reserved for the arts; one realized that the work did not depend on an empty formula, but rather on the rational expression of an idea: an artistic reform was rising, and in the first rank among the innovators figured the students who between 1821 and 1826 represented the school at Rome, Blouet, Gilbert, Duban, Labrouste, Duc, Vaudoyer.*⁶

Julien Guadet, an occasional student of Labrouste named to the prestigious post of Professor of Theory at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, cited this reformation in a famous passage in the introduction to his course of 1894:

*At the beginning of the century, the only aesthetic was to conceive a Roman building a priori. . . . A little later, a violent reaction substituted for the Roman a priori the medieval a priori, architecture of a culture even more different from our own. . . . Happily, several proud artists—our masters—perceived and made others perceive that independence does not consist in changing one's livery, and our art slowly freed itself from this paleontology. Everything has not been equally successful, but all the efforts toward this end have been fertile, and today we know and we proclaim that art has the right to liberty, that only liberty can assure it life and fecundity, we might even say, salvation!*⁷

Finally, in 1922—the year of Le Corbusier's "Ville contemporaine pour 3 millions d'habitants"—the last great spokesman for the tradition, Georges Gromort, wrote:

A whole group of artists evolved whose works were to dominate the middle of the [nineteenth] century and prepare for the advent of an architecture totally new in its character, variety, and vitality, seemingly despite its traditional sources. The generation born with the century, that in fact of an age with the great romantics . . .

was fated to illuminate with the compositions of its maturity the eighteen years of the reign of Louis-Philippe and to sustain, for twenty years more, the architectural art of the second empire with examples of the authority of its old age. Four artists of the first rank successively won the grand prix: they were Gilbert in 1822, Duban in 1823, Labrouste in 1824, and Duc in 1825.⁸

For all the precision with which they date and attribute this architectural revolution, each of these authors modifies what it introduced. Blanc, a younger contemporary of the Romantic *pensionnaires*, sees it as a new clarity in the study of history. Magne, the son of an architect of this generation, depicts it as rationalism per se, in structure as well as in style. Guadet sees it as freedom from stylistic restrictions through eclectic selection of sources. Gromort perceives it even more abstractly, as broad compositional elasticity. All are partially right, as we shall see. This was a multiple phenomenon unfolding over time: the works of the Romantic *pensionnaires* were, in turn, historicist, rationalist, eclectic, and compositional. But these were not entirely individual contributions of four men incidentally contemporary: each of these qualities was present in each man's work, making it always experimental and complex.

Their enterprise was to find principles so basic that they could embrace the entire history of architecture and remain valid for the nineteenth century as well. They wished to understand the whole of the world's architectural speech and discourse in a universal language. They tried to do so by simultaneously studying structure, space, and decoration. It was an impossibly comprehensive program—one that could only have been seriously undertaken in the positivist 1830s. It produced various results in the individual works of these men, even more divergent results in that of their successors, and finally academicism when, with Guadet and Gromort at the turn of the century, its comprehensiveness was mistaken for a system that was all-inclusive and eternal, but that in fact proved to be out of date.

By the end of World War II this tradition and its century were history. Until recently the historical study of nineteenth-century France has largely avoided the Romantic generation of 1830. They had been appropriated by the Beaux-Arts tradition and thus were deeply suspect to the emerging modernists of the 1920s. Sigfried Giedion, first in his *Bauen im Frankreich, Eisen, Eisenbeton* of 1928 and then in his *Space, Time and Architecture* of 1941, turned attention to engineering rather than design and initiated a long series of explorations of nineteenth-century French technology—often in its utopian aspect—of which Paul Dufournet, Françoise Bourdon, and François Loyer's *Hector Horeau* (1980) and Bernard Marrey's *Les Grands Magasins* (1979) and *Vie et l'oeuvre extraordinaire de M. Gustave Eiffel* (1984) are the most recent examples. Similarly, the anti-Beaux-Arts

Gothic rationalist tradition in France, that personified by Viollet-le-Duc and carried on by Anatole de Baudot and Louis Bonnier, has maintained its reputation as a protomodern movement and has been the subject of continuing research: Françoise Bercé's *Les premiers Travaux de la commission des monuments historiques* (1979), J.-M. Leniaud's *Jean-Baptiste Lassus* (1980), and the 1980 exhibition and catalogue *Viollet-le-Duc*. A third area of research has also emerged from the continued philosophical definition of the nature of modernism and the exploration of the events in economics, politics, and thought accompanying the French Revolution of 1789. Starting from the work of conceptualists like Michel Foucault, this has produced Tony Vidler's studies of Ledoux, Richard Etlin's *The Architecture of Death* (1984), Joseph Rykwert's *The First Moderns* (1980), Alberto Pérez-Gómez's *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science* (1983), and, more narrowly, Werner Szambien's *J.-N.-L. Durand* (1984).

All of this has stepped around the central tradition, that which came to be called Beaux-Arts. Even Labrouste, for all his technological innovation and the respect he enjoyed from the Gothicists, seemed tangential to Giedion and his successors.⁹ The only exceptions were the most distanced and conservative historians, such as Louis Hauteceur in the sixth and seventh volumes of his magisterial *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France* (1955 and 1957) and Donald Drew Egbert in his posthumously published *Beaux-Arts Tradition in French Architecture* (1980). Recently this has changed, however. Commencing with Arthur Drexler's exhibition and book *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts* of 1975–77 and continuing with the series of exhibitions and catalogues of nineteenth-century student work produced by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts itself, a broad documentation of the subject has begun to appear. The projected exhibitions of the new Musée d'Orsay in Paris will carry this further.¹⁰ But this interest stems less from historical regard for the subject than from a contemporary, postmodern hope that the Beaux-Arts encapsulated a smooth, consistent system—like the turn-of-the-century American classicism of McKim and Burnham—that might be appropriated to balance the exclusiveness and utopianism of modern design.

The realization that at least at its origins, in the work of Duban, Labrouste, Duc, and Vaudoyer, the Beaux-Arts tradition was something infinitely more complex, personal, and difficult was the doing of Neil Levine in his doctoral dissertation "Architectural Reasoning in the Age of Positivism: The Néo-Grec Idea of Henri Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève" (1975) as well as in his contribution to the Drexler volume. Levine's work has given historical value to the central Beaux-Arts tradition by delving into the subtleties of its foundation. Robin Middleton in England and Bruno Foucart in France have been working along similar lines, as are a number of younger scholars in the United States—Chris-

topher Mead, Katherine Fisher Taylor, Barry Bergdoll, Alice Friedman—and researchers in France who are pursuing the careers of Labrouste, Alfred Normand, Gabriel Davioud, Paul Abadie, Victor Laloux, Jacques-Ignace Hittorff, and Charles Garnier.¹¹

This volume is a contribution to that project. It seeks to analyze the intentions of Duban, Labrouste, Duc, and Vaudoyer in the immediate context of architectural evolution during the Romantic years of the second quarter of the nineteenth century. But, more specifically, it seeks to approach their work as a manifestation of the centralized government bureaucracy within which it was produced, which gave it an abstract, classical inflection before 1850, and which made it profoundly expressive of the Second Empire during the two decades after. The designs that resulted were Romantic in attempting to be of their time and place by respecting the materials, climate, and social character of nineteenth-century France. But these designs were also classical in imposing a particular traditional Parisian abstract logic upon each problem as well as in adopting one or another version of the classical architectural vocabulary. They were never bohemian, Gothacist, or futurist. Such qualities were ultimately unappreciated by Duban, Labrouste, Duc, and Vaudoyer, whose enterprise was the inflected expression of an institution and a tradition. As a result, what they created was an elastic, diagrammatic art that could be systematized, taught, and exported all over the world as the basis of the Beaux-Arts movement in late-nineteenth-century architecture. The origins of this art were complex, however, and in that complexity lay the elasticity that made it such a powerful and pervasive idea.

Designing Paris

One

THE STUDENT WORK: THE *ENVOIS* FROM THE FRENCH ACADEMY IN ROME

The seminal episode in the story of the Romantic *pensionnaires* is their coming together at the French Academy in Rome after winning the Grand Prix in four successive years.¹ Held every year since 1720, the competition bestowed upon the winning student in painting, sculpture, and architecture a five-year state pension for study in Rome. Duban, the oldest of the four, won in architecture in 1823 and arrived in Rome at the end of that year. He was the son of a Bordeaux *quincaillier* and the brother-in-law of the Parisian architect and academician François Debret (1777–1850). Debret trained Duban in his atelier and shepherded him through the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Labrousse, who followed the next December, was the son of François-Marie-Alexandre Labrousse, Premier Commis des Finances and an important government official during the Revolution, Empire, Restoration, and Monarchy of July. Duc, who trained in the atelier of André-Marie Chatillon (1782–1859), arrived in 1825. The son of a fashionable sword-maker in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, he had his roots in the upper level of the artisanal class. Vaudoyer arrived at the end of 1826. He was from the heart of the architectural profession itself: son of the academician Antoine-Laurent-Thomas Vaudoyer (1756–1846), in whose atelier both he and Labrousse trained, and cousin of the academician Hippolyte Lebas (1782–1867). For two remarkable years, 1827–28, the four *pensionnaires* were in Rome working together.

The Académie des Beaux-Arts (which administered the Grand Prix competition and the French Academy in Rome) required the *pensionnaires* to execute studies of details of “les plus beaux monuments antiques” during the first three years of their stay, the study of an entire “monument antique d’Italie” together with a reconstruction and a historical note during their fourth year, and, during their fifth year, “le projet d’un monument public de sa composition, et conforme aux usages de la France.” Study was to be concentrated in Rome itself; travel was to be authorized by the Director and supposedly was restricted to the last two years of work.² The yearly projects, or *envois*, were exhibited in Rome, then sent

to Paris for exhibition and criticism by the Académie. A formal (and usually polite) report on them was prepared by the Secrétaire Perpétuel and read at the Académie's annual *séance publique* in October, while a more lengthy, specific report was sent by him to the Director in Rome.

Though Duban, Labrousse, Duc, and Vaudoyer started with the mandated examination of Roman architectural remains, they were soon studying the whole span of architectural periods and types. From this they derived a vivid sense of history and a specificity and richness in their conception of modern architecture that they would at times permit to be labeled "Romantic." Where their old Neoclassical teachers in Paris had expected them to see an array of eternal, paradigmatic forms, in the monuments of Rome they saw functions, lives, and stories producing an infinite number of ephemeral shapes whose continuing transformation would produce a modern architecture consistent only in its generative principles.

Vaudoyer's thinking was already beginning to focus during the trip down to Rome through Turin, Milan, Bologna, Florence, and Siena, and the terms in which it was focusing were far from those of conventional Neoclassicism. "The cathedral gave me infinite pleasure," he wrote his father on January 6, 1827, of Siena. "A harmony reigns between the exterior and the interior and everything is decorated with colored marbles, paintings, etc. . . . and in no way resembles our white, cold churches in Paris." In Florence Vaudoyer had been unimpressed by the Pitti Palace, "the character of which I do not find appropriate for the habitation of a prince," but admired the Duomo and the Baptistry, "of which one cannot have any idea until one has seen them." Of San Miniato he remarked, "As Labrousse wrote me, it is a very beautiful thing." Labrousse, breaking the rule forbidding *pensionnaires* to travel during their first three years in Rome, had visited Florence in 1825. His enthusiastic discovery there of pre-Raphaelite architecture, embodied in a meticulous study of the Duomo and communicated to Vaudoyer by letter, had clearly already begun to influence the latter's thinking. "I will be very happy," Vaudoyer concluded of Florence, "when I return here to work."³

Settled in Rome, he was pleased to form tight friendships with the other *architectes pensionnaires*. "We are extremely close," he wrote in January 1827, "people find us haughty. I don't know why. . . . Labrousse and Duc have conducted me around all the ruins."⁴ Soon he was helping Duc measure the capitals of the Temple of Jupiter Stator, learning important lessons about the close reading of monuments, as we shall see.⁵ On May 18 Vaudoyer left for Florence in the company of Duban, Duc, and A.-A.-F. Decraëne (1797–1859), a Belgian friend from his father's atelier.⁶ They traveled through the Etruscan, Early Roman, and pre-Raphaelite cities of Narni, Terni, Spoleto, Assisi, Perugia, and Arezzo and returned in early

July with a detour to Bologna.⁷ The three *pensionnaires* would remember this trip as the moment when they began to understand how they could make use of what they had studied.⁸ The next year, 1828, was spent in a strenuous program of travel. In May and early June, Vaudoyer walked through Latium with Duban, Duc, Labrouste, and Labrouste's older brother Théodore (1799–1885), who had arrived in January. They saw the Etruscan and Early Roman monuments at Ariccia (the Tomb of the Horatii), Velettri, Cori, Segni, Palestrina, and Tusculum and visited Renaissance Frascati, where they found time to see only the Villa Aldobrandini.⁹ In July Vaudoyer traveled with Henri Labrouste to the Adriatic coast, visiting Loretto, Ancona, Fano, Rimini, and Ravenna, and returned alone through Assisi.¹⁰ Rimini proved a disappointment both in the Roman bridge and in Alberti's San Francesco, but Ravenna was exciting, especially for the wonderfully cut stone cupola of the Tomb of Theodoric. Finally, in September, the group headed south—Vaudoyer, Decraëne, and Felix Wilhelm Kubly (1802–72), a Swiss student from his father's atelier, to Naples and Pompeii; Duc and Labrouste on to Sicily; then all together to Paestum.¹¹ The remains at Pompeii were more extensive than Vaudoyer had been led to expect; he found them immensely illuminating. Of Paestum he wrote, "The appearance of this beautiful ruin ravished me. It was one of the things that impressed me the most."¹²

Now, it seems, the work of discovery was over: the *pensionnaires* ceased their frenetic traveling. In 1829 Labrouste had only his fifth-year *envoi* to execute, an original design on a modern program; Duc's archaeological fourth-year *envoi* was a reconstruction of the Colosseum, which was near at hand; and Duban had returned to Paris that January. Vaudoyer wrote his father that he would stay in Rome to gather his thoughts.¹³ Aside from short side trips to the Etruscan and Early Roman sites around Rome—Tivoli and Cori again with Théodore Labrouste in April,¹⁴ Palestrina and Tivoli in late summer;¹⁵ and, most notably, Tarquinia, where the celebrated archaic Etruscan tombs had been discovered, with Duc and both Labroustes in October¹⁶—Vaudoyer stayed put until April 19, 1830. Then he commenced one last major trip, a six-week journey to Naples and Sicily with Théodore Labrouste and A.-F.-F. Fries, a student of Huyot sent by him to Rome to measure Hadrian's Villa.¹⁷

Something exciting happened among the *architectes pensionnaires* in 1827–28. Together they formulated a new way of understanding architecture inspired by the study of the monuments of pre-Raphaelite Florence, of the Greeks in Sicily and at Paestum, and of the Etruscans and Republican Romans in Tuscany and Latium. It made the *pensionnaires'* former work at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris seem academic and worthless. Already on July 26, 1827, Vaudoyer wrote his father, "In general we disown what we have produced in Paris and count on our future productions to efface the

errors of the past.”¹⁸ The way to this rejection of the Ecole’s teachings was led by Henri Labrousse—the first to go to Florence, the first to do a Greek *envoi*—and seemed to lose some of its impetus when Labrousse returned to Paris in early 1830. What exactly led to the *pensionnaires*’ change of heart? Some answers emerge in Vaudoyer’s letters.

One of the first notes of what was to become a sharp discordance in the father-son correspondence is struck by Léon’s disparagement of the accuracy of earlier studies of Italian monuments. He had carried with him Charles Percier’s folio *Choix des plus célèbres maisons de plaisance de Rome* (1809), and on January 22, 1827, shortly after his arrival, he remarked that “all the villas that I see prove the charlatanism of the work of M. Percier.” By February 16 he was lecturing his father: “The drawings of M. Thibault [1757–1826] prove that in this time one made something of nothing. That fashion is passé and we think more seriously. One does not pass one’s time . . . in making sketches by the bushel.” The elder Vaudoyer’s response that Léon might enjoy the convenience of a camera obscura occasioned an even louder detonation:

*Is it with a camera obscura that we have drawn the entablatures and capitals we have sent back to Paris each year? I measured that of Jupiter Stator and I can judge how much effort it represents to measure, to restore, to trace, and to render. Is it with a camera obscura that Labrousse and Duc made their trip to Pompeii, from which they returned, not with sketches and picturesque views, but with plans and sections measured and redrawn? One no longer makes sketches as before which one never redraws and which repose in a portfolio without ever being consulted. One arrives in Paris today with [the record of] a complete tour, as much of ancient [monuments] as of modern, which one can utilize immediately; our manner of working today is not a fashion; it is scientific and incontestably superior to that of our predecessors.*¹⁹

Vaudoyer ends by complimenting the one member of the former generation whom the *pensionnaires* respected (at least initially), Jean-Nicolas Huyot (1780–1840), professor of the History of Architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and author in 1811 of the first painstakingly accurate archaeological *envoi*, a study of the Temple of Fortuna at Palestrina.²⁰ Jacques-Ignace Hittorff (1792–1867), however, having raced through Pompeii and Sicily in two months in the winter of 1823–24, is disparaged by Vaudoyer—“Did nothing, remaining at Pompeii a single day”—and charged by him with “charlatanisme.”²¹

What Vaudoyer and his fellow *pensionnaires* were seeking to accomplish was demonstrated in their *envois*. We have Vaudoyer’s explanation of his second-year project, executed during the frenetic year of 1828, and his

third-year study of 1829.²² The first was a parallel study of the temples of Minerva at Assisi, of Fortune at Tivoli, and of Fortuna Virilis at Rome. "I sought in my second-year *envoi*," he wrote his father on July 20, 1829, "to direct my attention to a more primitive architecture, to that simple architecture which owes its beauty only to its forms and proportions without distracting the attention to some frieze or *raye de coeur* more or less well executed." Thus in reconstructing missing parts he sought to work in the particular spirit of these primitive, simple productions, not in terms of modern taste:

*The moderns have denatured this order [at Cori] because they did not study its principles. It is thus that one Attic sees bases attached to Doric columns. . . . I have not tried to make a beautiful door (in my reconstruction of the temple of Fortuna Virilis), but to make a door in the character of the rest of the monument, which has obliged me to use somewhat crude moldings. . . . I have not made what one calls beaux dessins, that is of ornamental details, friezes, etc. . . . but I have made good studies (bonnes études).*²³

The Académie des Beaux-Arts, which was confronted in this same dispatch of *envois* by Labrouste's Paestum and Duban's *temple protestant*, was not sympathetic. It criticized the poverty of Vaudoyer's models and especially the fact that they were built of limestone rather than smooth, sculpted marble.²⁴ In response Vaudoyer sent his third-year *envoi*, a parallel study of four ceremonial arches, again in stone: those at Fano, Ancona, Benevento, and the Porta Maggiore in Rome. His intentions, he wrote his father, were to show how the same arched form (indeed, three of the four from the same, Hadrianic period) took on subtle inflections when applied in different situations. The arch at Fano was a city gate built into a defensive wall, that at Ancona a freestanding monument, that at Benevento the entrance to a forum, and the Porta Maggiore the passage of an aqueduct over a major avenue.²⁵ He explained, "I am seeking to make it understood that I do not wish to make a comparative study but instead separate studies of monuments that nevertheless have some analogy of form and of construction; that is, the architecture of arches and vaults."²⁶ This sensitivity led him to dismiss Charles-Edouard Isabelle's *Parallèle des salles rondes de l'Italie* because the buildings illustrated were arranged by shape and not by function.²⁷ He changed his mind about a favorite project by Huyot for the Arc de Triomphe because it was based on the gate at Fano, with its pilastered gallery for passage along the city wall, and thus was inappropriate for a freestanding monument.²⁸

Finally, in a lengthy letter of November 28, 1831, to his cousin Hippolyte Lebas, Léon tried to make a general statement of his new principles:

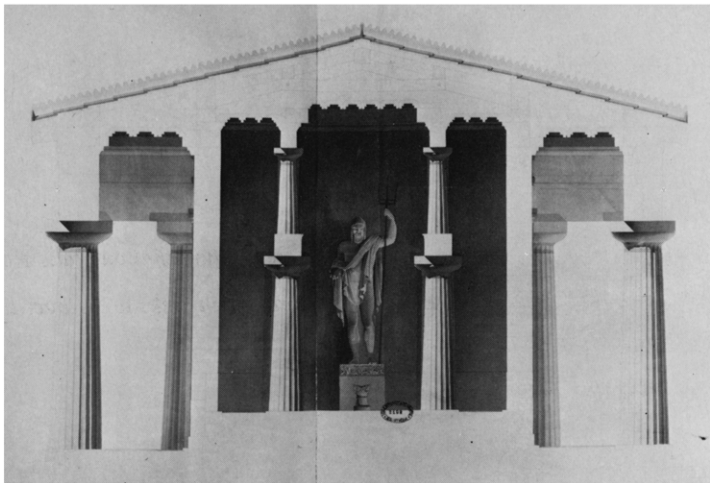
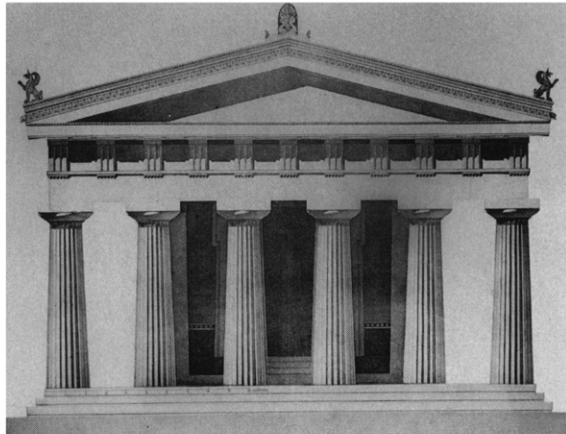
Ideas have changed; the constitutional system has arrived and brought with it the spirit of examination, logic, and economy. One has begun now to think that it does not suffice to have an excellent taste for arrangement, to adjust ornaments perfectly, to draw to perfection, to encumber monuments with statutes, reliefs, etc. in order to make architecture. One has come to comprehend that our social and political institutions impose a considered architecture, logical, easily constructed, simple and economic. I do not make it my business to decide whether this is good or bad, but I think, nonetheless, that there is more merit in the monuments of the [Roman] Republic than in those of the time of Trajan; that it is not the richness of material nor the immensity of monuments that constitute true beauty, but rather a clear idea of propriety (convenances), of the needs of the period, and finally the nobleness of forms and the expression of a character appropriate to each thing. The Temple de la Paix [Pantheon] in brick and stucco is a masterpiece that is in no way inferior to the richest monuments in marble. I thus think that in order to satisfy the needs of our time, one must by preference study the rudimentary architecture (architecture radicale) of the ancients, that is, that which had to satisfy basic functions and was not corrupted by luxury. It is in this rudimentary architecture that one best perceives the reasons for forms, the skeleton in fact, which later conceals itself under rich garments. It is in order to strip the rich monuments of the Empire of all their adornment and to discover the nude that it is necessary to engage in the study of these Republican or Greek monuments which have only the purity of their forms and their simplicity for ornament. . . . So, this architecture that one calls Romantic, I don't know very well why, is an architecture which seeks to discover true principles, which demands that each form be determined by reason and necessity, which seeks to submit itself to the nature of materials, which tries, finally, to set this art in harmony with its century.²⁹

Later, in a letter of January 29, 1832, one of his last from Rome, Vaudoyer told his father of a conversation between Huyot and Duc: "After a long architectural discussion . . . they parted, saying: one, Duc, was a partisan of what was determined by reason and necessity and the other, Huyot, was a partisan of what first of all pleased the eye despite these two considerations." Vaudoyer concluded, "Thus you have two completely incompatible systems and no hope of ever seeing them changed."³⁰

With Vaudoyer, however, we are only working around the edge of the problem. The central figure was Labrouste and the pivotal *envoi* his study

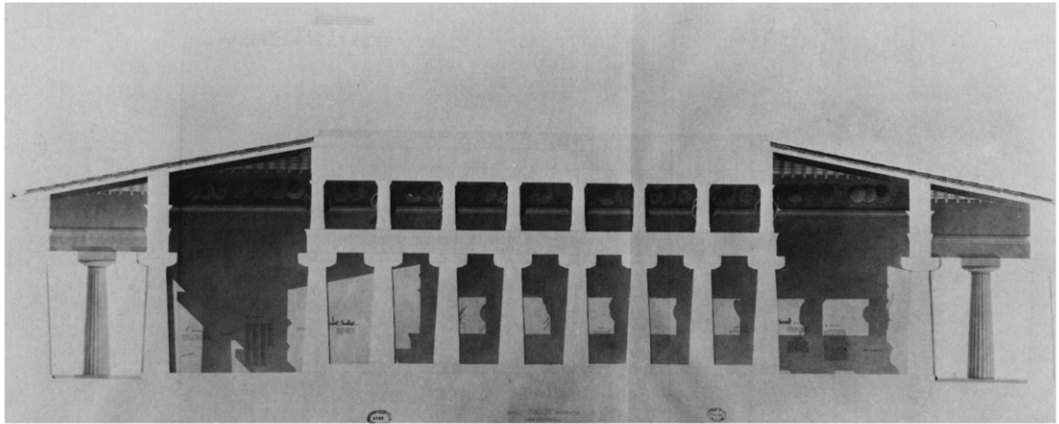
1

Henri Labrouste, Temple of Neptune (Hera II), Paestum, reconstruction of facade. Fourth-year envoi, 1828–29. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: H. d’Espouy, Fragments d’architecture antique)



2

Henri Labrouste, Temple of Neptune (Hera II), Paestum, reconstructed cross section. Fourth-year envoi, 1828–29. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: Bulloz)



3
Henri Labrouste, Basilica (Temple of Hera I), Paestum, reconstructed longitudinal cross section. Fourth-year envoi, 1828–29. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: Bulloz)

of Paestum executed in the *annus mirabilis*, 1828 (figures 1–3).³¹ Everything Vaudoier explains—along with a good deal he does not—appears here, but more decisively and subtly. The Paestum study was later regarded as the first clear proclamation of the architectural revolution and was, at the time, the target of the Académie’s bitterest criticisms.

The controversy over Labrouste’s *envoi* centered on charges of archaeological inaccuracy (compared to the 1793 *envoi* of Claude-Matthieu Delagardette [1762–1805]³²) in the review sent privately from the Secrétaire Perpétuel, Quatremère de Quincy, to Horace Vernet, the Director of the French Academy in Rome. So unjust did Vernet find these charges that he visited Paestum himself with Louis Duc to check the disputed details and then wrote the Académie a vindication of Labrouste’s project.³³ When the academicians refused to withdraw their criticisms, Vernet tendered his resignation (September 7, 1830), which was refused. At this point the coincidence of Labrouste’s return to Paris, the outbreak of the revolution of July 1830, and the agitation leading to the creation of the Commission des Beaux-Arts (January 25, 1831) to review the conduct of the Ecole encouraged Vernet and the Romantic *pensionnaires* (falsely as it turned out) to believe that the Académie had been bridled, and the crisis faded away.

Examining Labrouste’s drawings, one wonders what could have been so upsetting. The buildings are primitive stone monuments, like the temples Vaudoier made the subject of his second-year *envoi*, but they are Greek, not provincial Roman. These were among the best preserved of the Greek temples in Italy; there was very little to restore. In 1878 Henri Delaborde spoke of the boldness of Labrouste’s reading of the interior colonnades of the Temple of Neptune as supports for a closed roof and the garishness of his reconstruction of the painted terra-cotta gutters.³⁴ The former, however, was a logical solution to a recognized archaeological problem;³⁵ the latter conservative indeed when compared to the polychromatic reconstructions of Greek architecture being displayed in Paris during the late 1820s by Hittorff.³⁶ (In fact, the conservative critic Etienne-Jean Delécluze, reviewing the 1828 *envois* in the *Journal des Débats*, praised the “perfection” of Labrouste’s reconstructions but asked why he did not show *more* polychromy.³⁷ Compared to Emile Gilbert’s fourth-year *envoi* of 1826 restoring the almost completely destroyed Temple of Jupiter at Ostia—of which the Académie itself remarked that he had restored a great deal from very little—Labrouste’s Paestum seems singularly judicious and precise. Was Labrouste merely being made to pay for the aggressive radicality of Duban’s accompanying fifth-year *envoi* because the archaeological project could be disputed on familiar documentary grounds?

There was, however, something quite frightening in Labrouste’s *envoi*, something more evident in the text accompanying the studies than in the

drawings themselves, as Neil Levine has pointed out. The chronological ordering of the monuments previously established by Delagardette (and since proven by archaeological exploration) placed the so-called Basilica as the oldest, followed by the Temple of Ceres, then the Temple of Neptune.³⁸ Delagardette's rationale for this ordering was the progressive lightening of proportions documented elsewhere in Greek architecture.

Labrouste proposed a reversal: the Temple of Neptune first, then the Temple of Ceres, and finally the Basilica. He justified this by pointing out that Paestum was a Greek colony established in Italy far from Hellas and that this separation might be a more profound determinant of form than any progressive refinement imagined taking place everywhere simultaneously in the Mediterranean. Labrouste saw the Temple of Neptune as the earliest structure because it was the truest to the Attic paradigm represented at Olympia and Aegina. The Temple of Ceres he placed next because it had started to deviate from the Attic model (in proportions and in the placement of half metopes at the corners) and because it was made of two kinds of local stone, not one like the Temple of Neptune, indicating a greater familiarity with local quarries. The Basilica Labrouste placed last because it deviated the farthest from the Attic model. These last two structures, he stated, are no longer truly Greek, but "*d'une architecture autre.*" But as they deviated from the Greek model, they became more organic to the Tyrrhenian coast: "*Ces deux monuments seules offrent le type de l'architecture de Posidonia.*"

Labrouste found confirmation of this sequence in the local designation of the monuments. It would be logical, he observed, after the perilous sea journey from Greece, for the colonists to erect their first temple to the god of the sea, Neptune. Then, after the colony had set down roots and brought in fertile crops, a temple to the goddess of fertility, Ceres, would be appropriate. Finally, when the colony had become a strong political and military force, a civic meeting hall, the Basilica, would be necessary. Thus Labrouste depicted the group of buildings not as a microcosm of the evolution and refinement of the Doric Order, as they had been envisioned by Delagardette, but as a piece of history, revealing the specific state of mind and society of a colony of Greeks thriving two thousand five hundred years earlier. Labrouste's is a piece of Romantic historical writing in which monuments, like documents, are made to speak. Labrouste perceived a moving, personal story in the ruins of Paestum, just as his contemporary Augustin Thierry had found one in the historical documents of England and France.³⁹

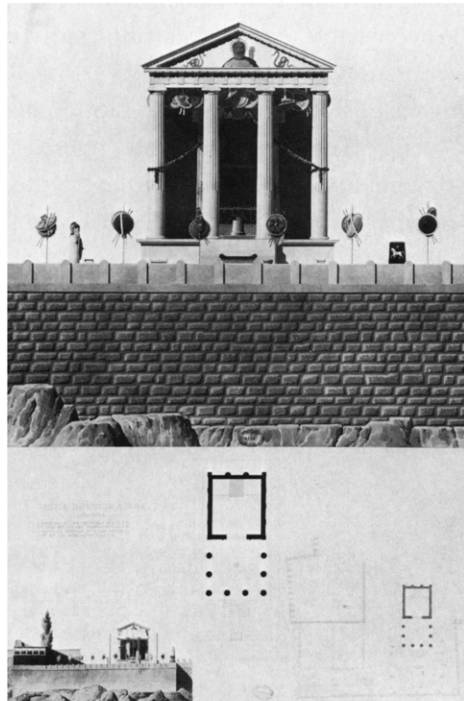
This personal story becomes most palpable in the details Labrouste added to his cross section of the Basilica (figure 3): inscriptions and symbols painted on the walls and shields and spears suspended from the exposed ceiling beams. This clothing of solemn ancient monuments in

anecdotal dress emerged as one of the chief motifs of the *envois* by the four *pensionnaires* who succeeded Vaudoyer, starting gently with Théodore Labrouste's second-year study of the Temple of Vesta at Rome of 1829 and becoming impishly exaggerated after the Revolution of 1830 in the successive fourth-year *envois* of Théodore Labrouste (figure 4), Marie-Antoine Delannoy (1800–60) and Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux (1801–71). Delannoy's (figure 5), appearing the year Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* was published, seems to envision the Tiber Island in terms of the cramped, overbuilt Ile de la Cité, in defiance of generations of French classicists who had tried to project Paris as if it were Rome.

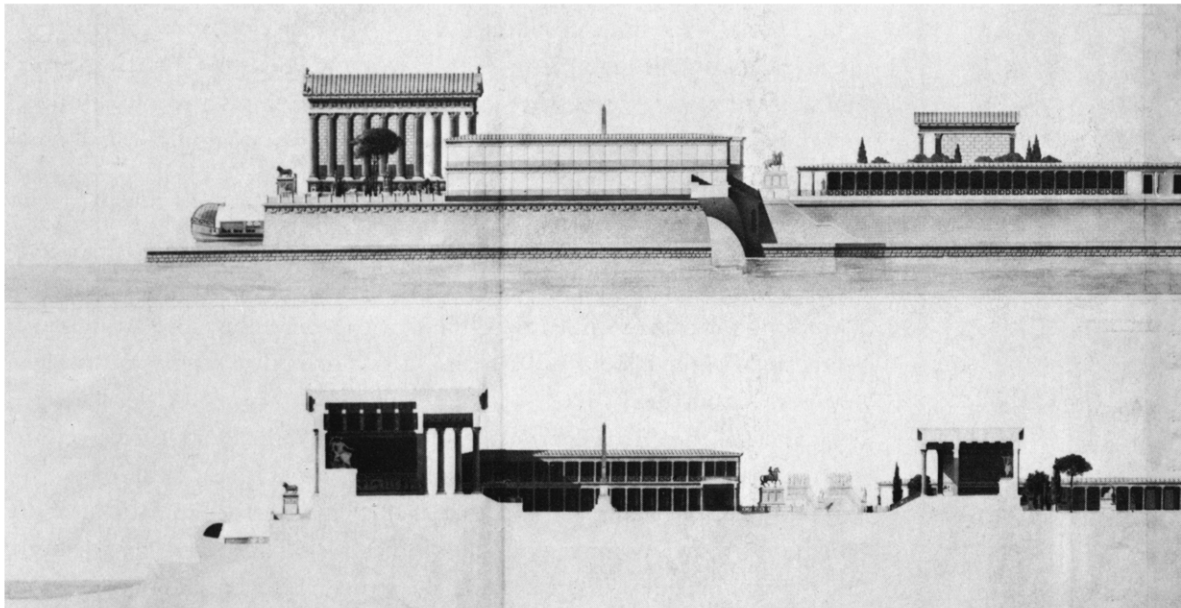
Labrouste accomplished this resurrection of the whole by reading ancient monuments closely, by training himself to see distinctions between structures apparently similar (just as Vaudoyer did with his *envoi* of arch forms). He could see one of these buildings at Paestum as not necessarily a temple at all. He refused the testimony of the conventional signs of meaning, the column and the pteripteral layout, to accept instead that of nuances of structure. He raised a new set of signs to consciousness and set aside the received vocabulary of Orders as meaningless (at least, outside Greece). What is amazing—and, to the Académie, enraging—is how much Labrouste was able to extract from the close examination of three nearly identical stone boxes.

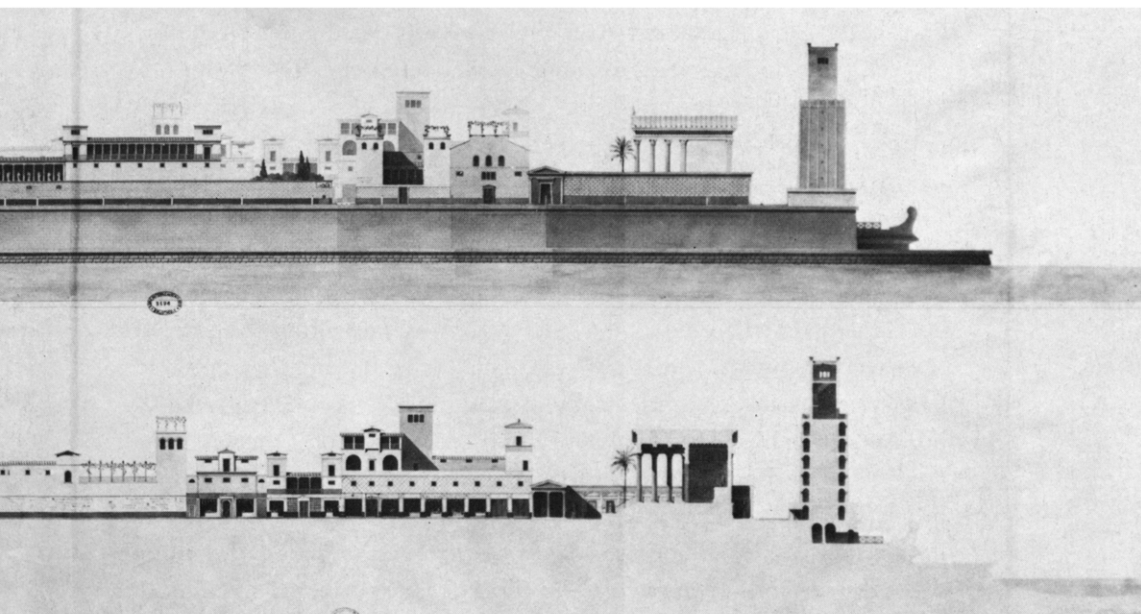
Labrouste's Paestum *envoi*, then, was a different kind of reconstruction than the Académie required or expected. But beyond this it had a general message that no one could have missed: the pure Attic style could not be removed from its natural soil in Greece without decaying into the ill-formed if practical architecture of the Paestum Basilica. The larger question Labrouste's drawings posed is clear: If Greek colonists at the apogee of Attic art could not meaningfully reproduce the Doric temple form once removed to a foreign place, how could a Frenchman in the nineteenth century hope to do so in Paris? If the Doric Order decayed so far in the short span of the history of Paestum, how much more utterly must it have evaporated by 1828?

It is clear, then, that Labrouste is declaring that the Doric Order could not survive out of its original time and place, but it is also clear in his rendering of the Temple of Neptune that he agreed that the Attic ideal of form did, at one moment, exist. In the Temple of Ceres and the Basilica he showed the effect of the cultural and structural forces enumerated by Vaudoyer. What forces, however, did he imagine produced the elegantly adjusted forms of the Temple of Neptune? One might reply that, though more subtly here than in the Basilica, structural forces are at work. Thirty-five years later Viollet-le-Duc would analyze the Doric temple in his *Entretiens* to show that it was essentially a rational structure in stone. Labrouste's suggestion that the interior two-storied colonnades did not



4
Théodore Labrouste, Temple of Hercules, Cora, reconstructed facade. Fourth-year envoi, 1831–32. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: Bulloz)





5

Marie-Antoine Delannoy, Tiber Island, Rome, reconstructed view from the south. Fourth-year envoi, 1832–33. Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris. (Photo: James Mathews)

support balconies, but were instead a clever way of reducing the wide span of the roof members, has been depicted as structurally rationalist. But Labrouste's solution was that the tall supports were divided into two tiers of columns so that the ceiling could be reached without changing the proportions of the shafts or making them of excessive girth. A structural solution this is, but one to solve an aesthetic problem: how to maintain proper proportions in a difficult situation. Just such elegancies defined the mainstream of classical architectural thought from Ictinus to Palladio to Percier. Labrouste also expressed a preference for the adjustment of the triglyph at the corners of the entablature, a Greek refinement controverting the more regular but less elegant Renaissance and Roman practice. When in 1902 Hector d'Espouy made a selection of the most "classic" *envois* for his *Fragments d'architecture antique*, he devoted three plates to Labrouste's drawings of the Temple of Neptune and, not surprisingly, none to those of the Basilica.⁴⁰

Should we read Labrouste's study as a factual history or as a mirror of a personal state of mind? Might we suppose that Labrouste, examining these evocative remains, deciphered not so much the history of Greek architecture in Italy as the evolution of his own conception of design? That is, the Temple of Neptune—beautiful in form but impossible to sustain by reason and necessity—is the Neoclassical ideal Labrouste himself imbibed in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, which he embodied in his Grand Prix project, and which he went to Rome in 1824 to pursue. The Basilica, by extension, is the expression of the collapse of that ideal in Labrouste's mind by 1828 as a result of his experiences in Rome.

This personal interpretation would explain Labrouste's fifth-year *envoi*, a *pont frontière* crossing a stream on the French-Italian border. The Académie intended that this *envoi* should be a large and elaborate composition, but Labrouste sent almost nothing: "un joli sentiment," to quote Vaudoyer.⁴¹ In 1840 Labrouste stated the academic expectation of a fifth-year *envoi* to be "something that . . . was made for France but that appeared to be inspired by travel and the study of Antiquity."⁴² To an artist like Labrouste, believing in the fundamental importance of local character (and himself a Frenchman exiled for five years to Rome), the question must immediately have been: What do France and Italy have in common? The simplest answer would be their border, their point of distinction. But of slight distinction, for the two realms do meet, if only along this edge. This border even has an architectural tradition embodied in the Roman bridge at Saint-Chamas and the arch at Aosta, upon which Labrouste's *envoi* is modeled: displaced, provincial Roman designs efficient in structure and simple in details like the Basilica at Paestum. Once again the Académie was moved to criticize his study of a debased, provincial model.⁴³

Is one justified in interpreting these *envois* symbolically? They purport

to be serious ancient and modern designs. Paestum certainly seems scrupulously archaeological in its details—all but one, however, and the most important: the extrapolation of the function of the buildings and thus of their chronological sequence. In reaching these conclusions Labrouste stated simply that he accepted the designations of local tradition. How could he place such faith in mere local tradition? Obviously because he felt his purpose to be the same: to explain monuments poetically, to reveal what they suggest to the intuitive, common mind.

Since Vico and Herder had been brought to the attention of the French intellectual public, first by Cousin in 1816–21, then by Michelet and Quinet in 1827, art in general and the great works of the Greeks in particular had come to be viewed as communal productions of Hellenic culture and history and as symbolic rather than factual narratives. Quinet and especially Michelet developed in their subsequent writing a “symbolic” reading of history.⁴⁴ Labrouste imposed a poetic chronological structure on the monuments at Paestum, concluding that its justness had already been recognized in the spontaneous tradition that designates them as temples to Neptune and Ceres and a basilica. These structures are not, in the end, envisioned as historical facts, but rather as inscrutable artifacts that are valuable for the poetic aperçu they suggest: the sudden glimpse of the Greek colonists in Italy losing their faith in the Doric ideal just as Labrouste himself, twenty-five hundred years later, was losing his.

It is obvious in Vaudoyer’s long letter to Lebas that his commitment to archaeological precision was more than just a fixation on correctness; it was the reflection as well of a new point of view—of “the spirit of examination” introduced by the new century of the “constitutional system,” producing something called “Romantic architecture.” Parallel to his development of the idea of precise reading of historical monuments are general remarks attempting to place his and his friends’ enterprise in cultural context—most particularly to link it to what appeared to be Romanticism.

The first murmurs came in June 1827. “Lord Byron, and not Biron,” Léon exasperatedly chides his father, “was never an admiral, but a very distinguished poet and a defender of the liberty of the Greeks. . . . To get an idea of his character one must read the *Dernier Chant du Pèlerinage de Chil Harolde* [sic] by M. A. de Lamartine. It is a masterpiece of French poetry.”⁴⁵ By October of that year Léon was asking for copies of Lamartine’s *Méditations* and *Pèlerinage de Childe Harold*. “Don’t go to Merlin, a rococo bookseller who doesn’t even know who Lamartine is, go to Gosse-lin.”⁴⁶ In October 1828 Chateaubriand arrived in Rome as French ambassador to the Holy See in the short-lived Liberal ministry of Martignac.⁴⁷ To the pleasure of the *pensionnaires*, Chateaubriand dined with them at the Villa Medici on December 12. The literary diplomat commissioned

Vaudoyer, at his own expense, to design a small monument to Poussin for the church of San Lorenzo in Lucina. The two met frequently and talked about art.⁴⁸

In late 1829 the Académie's harsh critique of the 1828 *envois* arrived at the Villa Medici, and Vaudoyer's mere mentions of Romanticism became straightforward declarations. In January 1830 he wrote:

*I persist in my opinion that we need no more mythology [in the programs formulated by the Ecole for the student competitions]; we live in the century of the practical [positif]; I do not criticize the virgins of Raphael; on the contrary I cite them as [the work of a] painter who represents the ideas of his time. As for modern subjects, I think one can paint them very well. I need no other examples than the plague of Jaffa and the battles of Aboukir and Eylau of M. Gros, the Sacre of David, and his Sermant du Jeu de Paume [as well as] the battle of Austerlitz and the Henri IV of Gérard, and to make my ideas clearer I tell you that the Famille malheureuse of M. Prud'hon impressed me more than all the Narcissus's in the world. It is what I would call a scène morale. I do not exclude Greek or Roman subjects nor allegory but it is time . . . to paint our own history. . . . We need no more mythology. That is finished in the arts as it is in theater and in literature.*⁴⁹

By March he was calling for a mild architectural revolution:

*I do not have the ability to make myself understood. . . . The war of which I speak is not dangerous. Here it is only a matter of taste. You know that in the matter of taste it is difficult to prove who is right; thus this war in architecture is nothing more than what exists in literature between the Hugoans and the classicists and the same in painting. Why shouldn't architecture also have its little revolution? That is completely natural; the force of events is leading to it. The architecture of a people should derive its character [from] 1. the institutions, 2. the customs, 3. the climate, 4. the nature of materials, etc. . . . Thus the architecture of 1830 cannot be that of 1680 when one built Versailles while making the people die of hunger and misery. The luxury of a despot is superb [and] amazing, but the happiness of an entire nation wisely governed is much more satisfying. Thus it is great wisdom which influences us today to return to architecture an expression truer and more in harmony with the ideas of our century.*⁵⁰

(The real, political revolution was to break out three months later in July, and the tone of Léon's letters was to become more menacing, as we shall see.)

The *pensionnaires'* most forceful declarations of Romanticism, nonetheless, were their fifth-year *envois*, original designs envisioned for modern France. Again the first decisive blow was struck in 1828 by Duban's *temple protestant*. Like Labrouste's Paestum series, which accompanied it to Paris, it is a difficult project to grasp immediately; but if placed carefully in context, it emerges as a most striking statement.

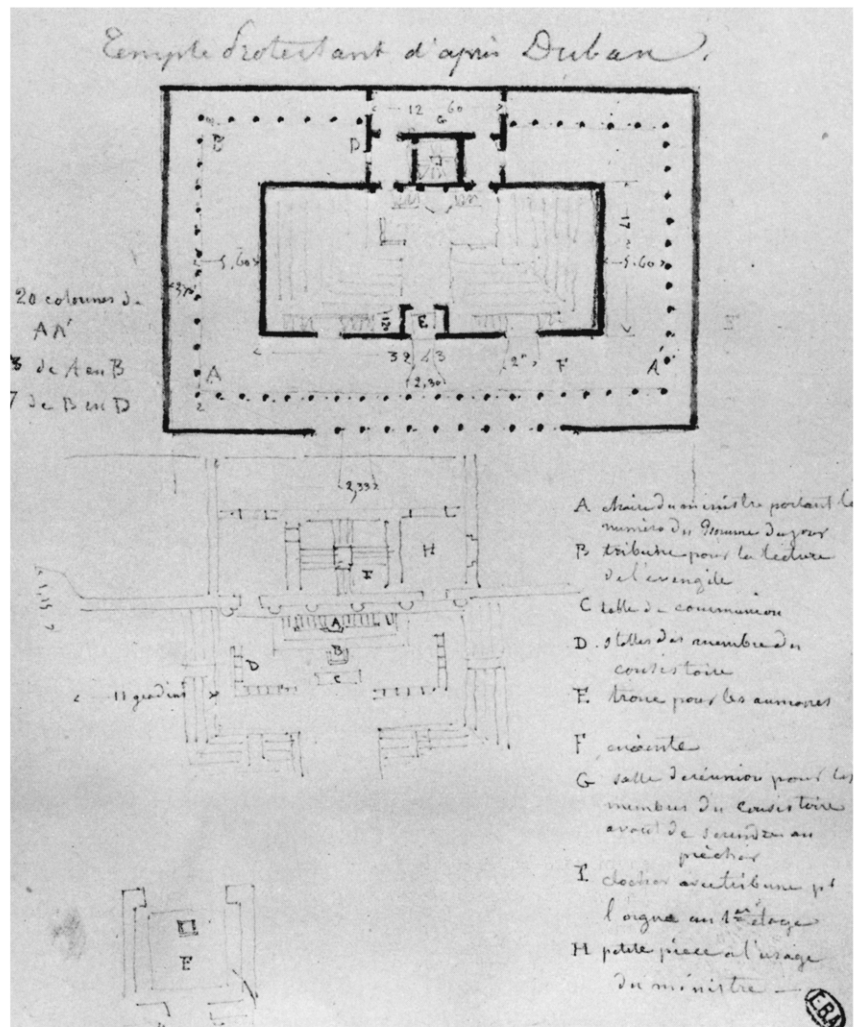
The original drawings of the project are lost, but the basic layout is recorded in two sets of sketches made after it, one by Labrouste and one by Joseph Lecointe (figures 6, 7).⁵¹ The latter are particularly precise and give the plan, section, and details with dimensions and with the liturgical furniture depicted and identified. The little that we know about the project is, in fact, what is most important.

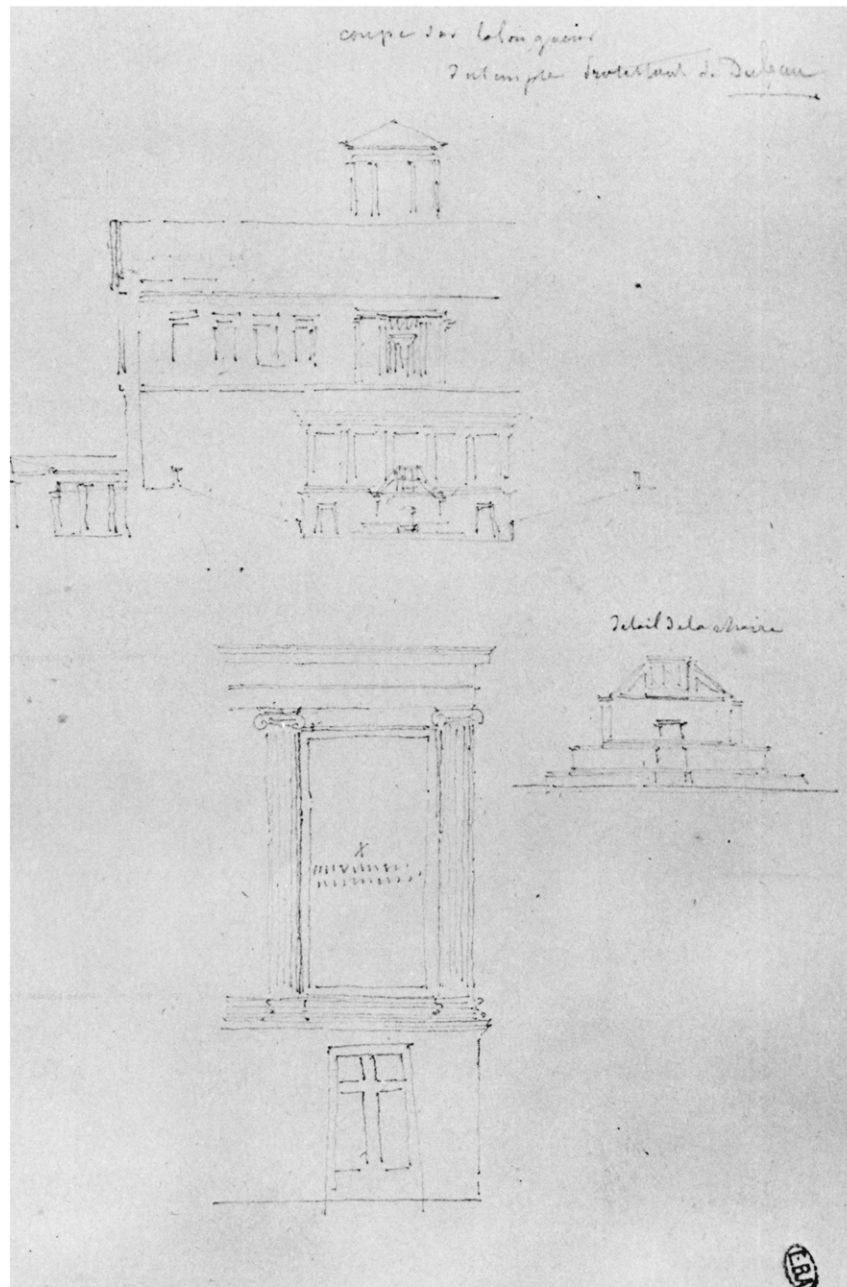
First, what kind of Protestant church is this? Duban identifies it only with the subscription, "Temple consacré au culte protestant." It does not resemble in layout or scale any of the impressive Protestant churches erected in Europe after 1800: Weinbrenner's Stadtkirche in Karlsruhe (1807–16), von Hansen's Vor Frue Kirke in Copenhagen (1811–16), Schinkel's Berlin parish churches (projected and built from 1827). Nor does Duban's design in any way resemble the model Protestant church that Wilhelm Stier, a friend of Hittorff and a student in Paris of Lecointe, had produced in Rome for Baron von Bunsen in 1827.⁵² Instead, it is a simple double-cubic volume (figure 8) without balconies or interior complexities of form. Seats tier up on three sides, and the altar table, pulpit, and organ are set vertically one above the other on the axis of the fourth. Behind is a bell tower and a room for the minister and the consistory. Around it is a walled cloister, probably the congregational cemetery. The Académie shook its head in dismay at this simplicity. The fifth-year *envoi* was to be the highest display of compositional *virtù*: a big plan accommodating a complex function, like the "Collège de France" Blouet had sent back in 1826 or the "Bourse" Gilbert had sent in 1827, or like the senate building or the public library that A.-L.-T. Vaudoyer had suggested to Léon in a letter of February 8, 1828. But all Duban sent was this little puritan preaching box. "This building admits neither sculpture, nor painting, nor richness of ornament—one regrets that M. Duban . . . has not found, in the obligatory simplicity of the subject he has chosen for his composition, the opportunity to apply his preceding studies," intoned the Académie (in the person of Quatremère de Quincy) at the *séance publique annuelle* of October 3, 1829.⁵³

Besides disappointing the Académie's expectation of a striking plan—what Léon Vaudoyer called a "pétard"—in a number of details Duban's project shows that it embodied ideas even more worrisome to the architectural bureaucracy of the Restoration. This particular plan, with everything in a single space arranged for ease of hearing and seeing, is Calvinist, and

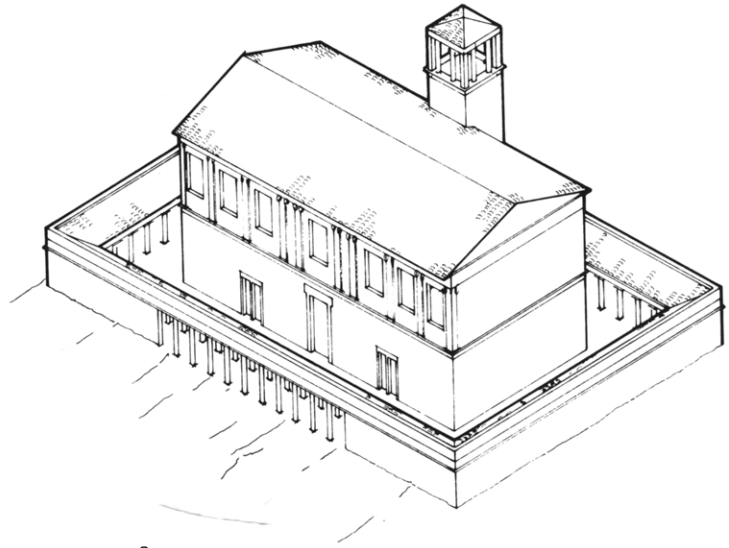
6

Félix Duban, Temple protestant,
plan. Fifth-year envoi, 1828–29.
Sketch by J.-F.-J. Lecoq. Ecole
des Beaux-Arts, Paris.





7
 Félix Duban, Temple protestant,
 cross section and details. Fifth-year
 envoi, 1828–29. Sketch by J.-F.-J.
 Lecoq. Ecole des Beaux-Arts,
 Paris.



8

*Félix Duban, Temple protestant,
reconstructed isometric view by
David Van Zanten.*



9

*Felix Wilhelm Kubly, Protestant
church, Heiden, Switzerland,
1838–40. (Photo courtesy Benno
Schubiger)*

more specifically Swiss Calvinist, a type established in Switzerland in the seventeenth century and manifested in Duban's day in Conrad Stadler's parish church at Uster (1823–26) and in Felix Wilhelm Kubly's at Heiden (1836–40, figure 9).⁵⁴ Kubly we have already met: he and Decraène were part of the Romantic *pensionnaires'* circle, both having studied with Labrousse and Léon Vaudoyer in A.-L.-T. Vaudoyer's atelier in Paris before coming to Rome. Duban's *temple protestant* is the middle term between Uster and Heiden. Nor was it done merely from books or from conversations with Kubly and Melchior Berri, who, besides being Duban's friend and a student of Huyot, was the son and son-in-law of Calvinist pastors from Basel.⁵⁵ On his way back to Paris from Rome in 1829, Duban studied Calvinist church architecture in Geneva (as well as, perhaps, elsewhere in Switzerland and Germany).⁵⁶ He redrew his *envoi* as a result and replaced that done in Rome with that shown in Lecoq's sketches.

Presenting a design for a Swiss Calvinist church for a fifth-year *envoi* in 1828 had several implications. First, it flouted the expectations of the Académie, which conducted the Academy in Rome specifically so that the ancient Mediterranean tradition might be thoroughly inculcated in its prize students. A Swiss Calvinist type is neither ancient nor Italian in any sense. Second, it was inimical to the policies of the restored Bourbon government. Technically, it presented a model for French Protestant church building (a tradition that had been forced into Switzerland in 1685 by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes). This was an appropriate gesture in 1828 due to the liberalization introduced by the ministry of Martignac that included, on January 11 of that year, the naming of the Swiss Lutheran Baron Georges Cuvier as Conseiller d'Etat for the newly upgraded division of Cultes Protestants et Israélites. But Martignac's year-long ministry was only a moment in the absolutist, clericist Restoration government, preceded by the repressive ministry of Villèle and followed by that of Polignac—which finally incited the revolution of 1830. Protestantism was otherwise a catchword for Liberalism and resistance to the Bourbon monarchy. Protestants led the Liberal opposition in parliament: Guizot, Benjamin Constant, de Labrousse, Delessert, Cuvier, Stapfer. Protestantism was presented as the philosophical ingredient that would regenerate French culture by Rousseau, de Staël, Sismondi, Constant, Mignet, and Quinet.⁵⁷

The historian and Liberal journalist François Mignet—famous as the author of the first popular history of the Revolution—had been very clear indeed about how Calvinism might be Liberalism in politics in his articles and in his popular lectures at the Paris Athénée of 1822 (“De la Ligue et de protestantisme en France”) and 1823 (“Histoire de la révolution d'Angleterre et de la restauration des Stuarts”). Formulating his ideas definitively in “Etablissement de la réforme à Genève” (1824–34), Mignet shows how Calvin, using the ecclesiastical government he created in the consistory,

established a democratic counterforce to the existing feudal authority so that in Geneva and subsequently in Holland, Scotland, England, and France the Calvinist church became the instrument of a parliamentary revolution. Calvin “subordinated the State to the Church,” Mignet wrote, *civil society to religious society, and prepared in Geneva a religion and a government for all those in Europe who rejected belief and resisted the government of their land. This is what happened in France during the minority of Charles IX; in Scotland during the troubled reign of Mary Stuart; in the Netherlands at the time of the revolt of the United Provinces; and in England under Charles I. . . . This system, which was to extend over a large part of Europe, which prepared the Protestantism of the insurrection against the princes as the system of Luther had prepared by Protestantism the insurrection against the Popes, which put an ecclesiastical government at the disposition of all countries where political power could not sustain itself, which was to agitate for sixty years in France, served to carry out the Reformation in Scotland, contributed to the emancipation of Holland, presided over the revolution in England, which would leave its mark on Coligny, on the Prince of Orange, on Cromwell, this Calvin introduced first in Geneva.*⁵⁸

Indeed, this is but the core of the concept of the evolution of post-medieval philosophical history formulated by Victor Cousin in his celebrated courses at the Sorbonne in 1828 and 1829. The Revolution of 1789, Cousin proposed, was but the outcome of the Reformation in Germany and the parliamentary revolution in England. These two phenomena were local and isolated in their time; but when generalized by the philosophers of the great, central nation of Europe, France, during the eighteenth century and when manifested in the Revolution, they were brought to fruition.⁵⁹

Both Liberalism and Protestantism were thoroughly bound up with Romanticism in the late-Restoration mind. In 1825 Ludovic Vitet (founder of the Commission des Monuments Historiques as well as a friend of Labrousse, Duban, and Vaudoyer) wrote, “Romanticism is Protestantism in the arts.”⁶⁰ The historians whom we have noted exploring the Protestant thread in French and European history were generally called “Romantic” and by the late 1820s were accepted as models for the Romantic writers led by Hugo.⁶¹ In the detail and vividness of their writing as well as in their admiration for the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance (the periods of the communes, the Reformation, and the first parliaments), they seem to complement Dumas, Nodier, and Hugo.

It was not a great step from equating Liberalism, Protestantism, and Romanticism to making anti-academicism the last term in the series. Since

David's campaign against the Académie during the Revolution, that institution had been firmly linked to absolutism. Now, with the royalist Quatremère de Quincy proclaiming a theory of an immutable ideal in the Orders, that charge seemed borne out. Not surprisingly, contemporary critics placed Duban's fifth-year *envoi* in this context. The architect Petrus Borel wrote in *L'Artiste* in 1833:

The temple, perfectly laid out, carefully thought through, of a fine and unexpected appearance, aroused loud cries from MM. the academicians; this design, at least as heretical as the communicants for whose use it was destined, was treated as one treats the Huguenots, and they almost made an auto-da-fé of it, or to speak a more harmonious language, a sacrifice to the God of Good Taste. . . . At this first and terrifying demonstration, the belle au bois dormant, that is the Académie, awoke alarmed and protested as strenuously as possible against this temple, questioning the legitimacy of their architecture of divine right, because there is also legitimacy and divine right in the Académie; because there is a legitimate architecture and an illegitimate one, because there is a revealed art and an apocryphal one, unrecognized, not by the Council of Nice or Trent, but by the council of Fontaine and Guénepin.⁶²

Duban's *envoi* was a rough equivalent of Hugo's *Cromwell* published the year before: an attack on the academic conventions expanded into an historical resuscitation of the age of Protestantism and parliamentarianism. Duban's trip to Switzerland to study Protestantism in its homeland coincided with those of Edgar Quinet and Jules Michelet to Germany (1827 and 1828, respectively), undertaken for the same purpose.⁶³

Neither Duban's flouting of the Académie's expectations nor his revolutionary political insinuations, however, are strictly architectural in nature. One can conclude from his *envoi* that he was dissatisfied with the Bourbon monarchy and with the Neoclassical administration of the arts, but can one perceive here the formulation of a profoundly new style of architecture? To look for peculiar ornaments and exotic configurations of the sort that Wilhelm Stier introduced into his Protestant church project of 1827, however, is to miss the basic principle of architectural creation accepted by the Romantic *pensionnaires*. Since, as Vaudoyer stated, architecture is the result of climatic, material, and social forces, to create a new architecture, one must study these forces. The Protestant church type, particularly in the form Duban has chosen here, was the key to the evolution of a new institutional form.

As we shall see in the next chapter, the Early Renaissance, represented in Italy by Brunelleschi and in France by the architects of François I, Henri

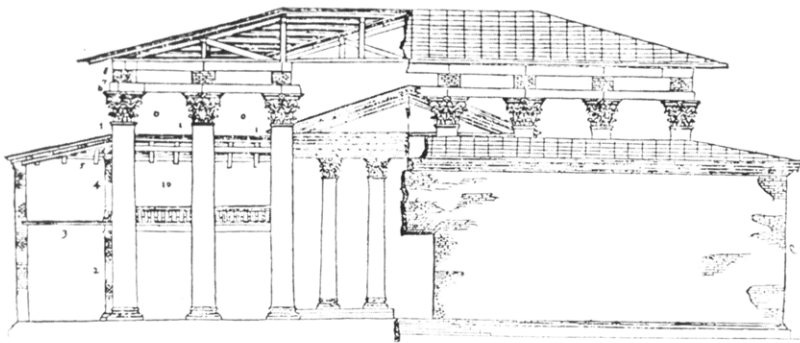
II, and Henri IV, was pictured by the Romantic *pensionnaires* as a moment when modern Christian culture comprehended the lucidity and logic of antiquity and was profoundly reanimated by this illumination, before sinking into the academicism of the Baroque and the absolutism of Louis XIV. The *pensionnaires*' objective was to carry architectural evolution forward from this point. Their friend the critic Hippolyte Fortoul later wrote that they "brought back from Rome, with a new and correct conception of the ancient monuments, the necessity to take up the architectural tradition where it had been in France at the beginning of the seventeenth century."⁶⁴ A basic component of this Early Renaissance French culture emphasized by every Liberal historian was Calvinism—a French conception gaining strength during the sixteenth century, almost establishing itself with Henri IV, then violently uprooted by Louis XIV in 1685.⁶⁵ French Calvinism's architectural masterwork was de Brosse's temple at Charenton, a huge double-cubic space set laterally on its axis. The Swiss Calvinist church type preserved its memory after Charenton was destroyed by a mob and Calvinist church building was forbidden in France.⁶⁶ Duban, in his *envoi*, was thus reintroducing the Charenton church type back into France, making good the cultural break brought about by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

There is one last knot Duban may have sought to tie with his *envoi*. At least by 1845, when writing of the Charenton temple in his "Etudes d'architecture en France," Vaudoyer recognized de Brosse's church as a materialization of Vitruvius's basilica at Fano (figure 10).⁶⁷ That is, he envisioned the church as picking up the thread of antiquity just as de Brosse's other works or Brunelleschi's dome did, but in an importantly different way. Not only was the form of the Fano building absolutely logical—being communicated by Vitruvius almost exclusively in terms of numerical ratios—but it was also specifically designed as a place for legal argument and judgment, a balconied double-cube with the tribune in the center of the long wall. Duban thus would appear to be evoking Fano as well as Charenton—Roman law as well as French Renaissance religion—to make the following historical point: that the Protestant church, like the Calvinist cult that engendered it, was a place of reason and judgment; its reason was Roman logic and its law Roman law (as indeed Calvinist law was). Calvin ruled Geneva as president of the consistory. By submitting this *envoi*, Duban made a series of architectural and cultural links previously ignored by academic Neoclassicism and Bourbon absolutism, ones connecting the Republican qualities of Roman antiquity with Renaissance Protestant France and now, in 1828, with the Liberal effort of Martignac's ministry.

It is interesting to note that the fourth-year *envoi* Labrousse originally intended to submit with Duban's *temple protestant* was a reconstruction of

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*Andrea Palladio, Reconstruction of
Vitruvius's basilica at Fano.*



Vitruvius's basilica at Fano. He traveled there with Vaudoyer in July to see whether there were any remains.⁶⁸ He changed his mind, however—and Vaudoyer insisted that it was not because he would have had only Vitruvius's written description to work from—perhaps because he wished to make his point personally, not as a reinforcement of Duban's.

After Duban's *temple protestant* came Labrouste's *pont frontière* and several other fifth-year *envois* pointedly political in subject: Duc's 1830 *monument aux victimes de la Révolution de 1830*, Vaudoyer's *beffroi* of 1831 (figure 11), Marie-Antoine Delannoy's *monument triomphal à élever à Toulon en l'honneur de l'armée d'Afrique* of 1833, Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux's *chambre des députés* of 1834 (figures 15–17), and Pierre-Joseph Garrez's *halle aux grains pour Paris* of 1835.⁶⁹ These last could celebrate the new order, however, as Duban's could not (although Constant-Dufeux's and Garrez's were seen as Republican and thus still revolutionary⁷⁰). What is remarkable about these projects is not only their subject but that they all reject the Académie's conception of the last *envoi* as a grand composition and thus carry the revolution in government into the administration of the arts.

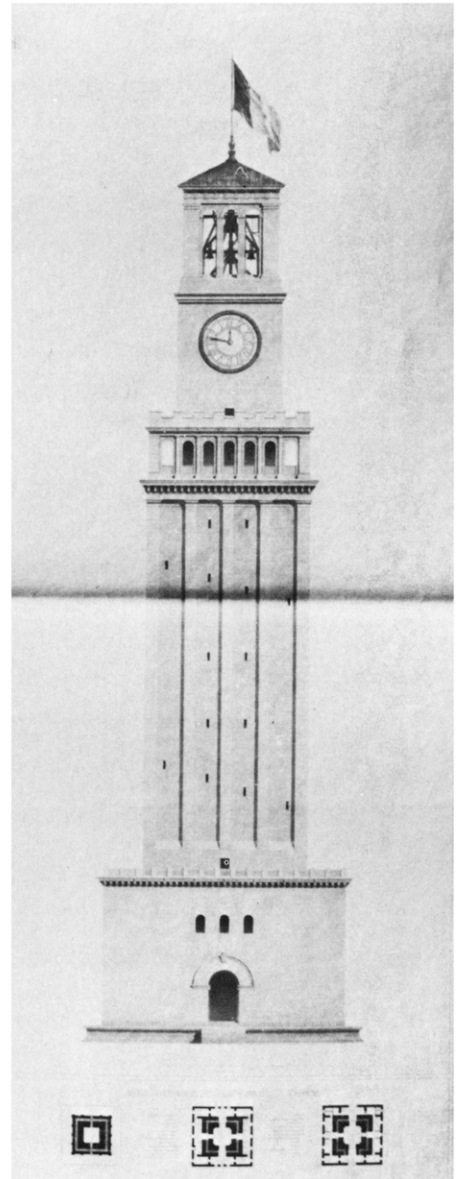
The Vaudoyer letters as usual permit an intimate glimpse of these events. In a letter of August 27, 1831, Léon announced his intention of executing a mere belfry, a *beffroi*, for his fifth-year project, already aware that “you will, I think, criticize me for the slight importance of this project.” He was too busy finishing his historical studies in Rome, he explained, to execute an elaborate composition of the sort the Académie required, and nonetheless felt that with a *beffroi* “one might make something very monumental and with great character.”⁷¹ Vaudoyer père responded on September 20:

*I admit that this choice has singularly amazed me. Is this, I ask myself, a motif to which one might apply (following the intention, the institution of this last envoi) all the advanced and excellent studies you made during your four preceding years? Is there here any invention in plan? An occasion for architectural and monumental disposition and proportioning? . . . Do you not fear that one will say of your beffroi what they did . . . of the prêche (preaching box) of M. Duban, of the bridge of M. Labrouste, and finally of the little monument de Juillet of this year on a half-sheet of paper simply in outline without plan or section by M. Duc?*⁷²

He went on to cite a list of proper subjects he had suggested in a letter of February 8, 1828—a *chambre des pairs avec salle de trône*, a *bibliothèque publique*, a *campo santo comme à Pise*, etc. But, a loving father, he devoted the rest of his letter to advice about how Léon might make his *beffroi* a good one. “This is your thunderclap,” he ended, “try to make it dazzling!”⁷³

11

Léon Vaudoyer, Beffroi pour une ville de guerre frontière. Fifth-year envoi, 1831–32. Private collection, Paris.



Receiving in response only a few remarks about details, interspersed with fierce declarations of adherence to Romanticism, Vaudoyer père wrote again on October 15 to suggest that Léon emphasize the decorative rather than the structural in his project. What came back from Vaudoyer fils, dated November 17, was this:

*I will never compromise my doctrines and . . . I will not sacrifice any of my ideas in an effort to please. I will not make a pétard. I have neither the time, the means nor the desire. If one insists to me tomorrow that a project of the sort I understand, a vast project, must be made, I would respond that I am not an architect, my studies are not finished, and this is because the arts are not taught in France as they should be.*⁷⁴

Léon also mentioned that he was studying the campaniles at Venice, Cremona, Modena, and Valencia for his *envoi*. His father advised him, in his reply of December 10, “Instead of falling back into the infancy of art, you should seek in the enlightened centuries the monuments which date from the best period of architecture.”⁷⁵

With his *envoi* finished and his departure from Rome approaching, Léon made his last declaration in a letter of January 4, 1832:

*How can one make architecture like [that of the Temple of] Venus and Rome with the ideas, the needs, the materials of today? There surely is the old school of the antique no matter what . . . and that produced the Madeleine, monument without local character, then in front of it the Chambre des Députés, which is another ancient temple, then the Bourse, and finally the portico of the Pantheon with its infamous lintels. That is how for so long our architecture has been without character; that, to say it more clearly, is why we do not have architecture. . . . Poor France!!! What I wish most is to have a bad report on my project [from the Académie] because then I might believe that it was not too bad.*⁷⁶

The Académie duly reported at the annual *séance publique* that Vaudoyer, “having confined himself in a project so slight, has denied himself all his means,”⁷⁷ and went on to attack all the fifth-year *envois* recently sent to Paris.

What was at issue? First, the refusal to present a display of compositional *virtù*. But there was more: a *beffroi* is not just its English analogue, a belfry. It is (to quote the dictionary of the Académie Française) a “tower or belfry where one stands watch, where there is a bell to sound an alarm.”⁷⁸ Again, Quatremère wrote in his *Dictionnaire d'architecture* of this very year: “It is, in fortified cities or in towns within reach of the enemy, a tower, a belfry, or an elevated place, where there is a bell that sounds

when one spots the enemy or when one wishes to assemble troops.”⁷⁹ It is a watchtower, more particularly a civil watchtower, an appendage to the *hôtel de ville* and the very opposite of a church belfry (which has a separate designation in French: *clocher*).

Vaudoyer himself wrote in 1841: “The *beffroi* and the *hôtel de ville* are often interchangeable, and in charters and franchises one bestows on a town the right to a *beffroi* as a sign of liberty.”⁸⁰ Later, in his didactic fantasy *Histoire d'un hôtel de ville et d'une cathédrale* (1878), Viollet-le-Duc vividly depicted the *beffroi* as the expression of the democratic, communal element in the architectural landscape of his fictive city of Clusy.⁸¹ When in 1099 a commune was established there, the old Gallo-Roman curia was transformed into a *hôtel de ville* by the addition of a massive *beffroi* where it fronted the market square. In this were hung three bells, “the first and the largest for the convocation of assemblies; the second for signaling fires, attacks, disturbances; the third to sound at morning and at curfew.”⁸² The bishop, however, refused to respect the commune, and his retainers robbed and molested the population. “Often, at night, one heard the bell in the *beffroi* ringing, announcing the attack of a party sallying from the episcopal palace against the richest houses.”⁸³ He forced the king to disestablish the commune. “The abolition of the commune was published in the town [with] an injunction that all the magistrates of the town should cease their functions, deposit the seal and the banner of the commune at the episcopal palace, take down the bells from the *beffroi* without delay, and avoid any assembly.”⁸⁴ In response the citizens gathered and, to the ringing of the bells in the *beffroi*, attacked the bishop’s palace and cathedral, burned them, and slaughtered their inhabitants.

Vaudoyer apparently wished his *beffroi* to be understood in this context, as indicated by the huge tricolor flapping at its roof peak. His initial intention had been to place his *beffroi* on the *terre-plein* at the west prow of the Ile de la Cité in Paris, “supposed to be in front of the city hall, which occupies the space covered by the Place Dauphine and the streets and buildings that surround it.”⁸⁵ The Revolution of 1830 had been proclaimed at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, as the Republics of 1848 and 1870 were also to be. It was Vaudoyer’s intention to install that institution in the central place of the Parisian urban landscape and mark it with a watchtower visible along the river and from the hills north and south.

Vaudoyer’s project, as executed, is isolated, not in Paris but on a “frontière de guerre.” It is merely a monument of vigilance, a reminder to the Académie that the revolution is accomplished and that there is a watch for resistance and backsliding. Student demonstrations against the administration of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and of the Grand Prix competition had followed the revolution of July and had closed the school most of the fall.⁸⁶ In Rome Labrouste had already been proposing reforms of these

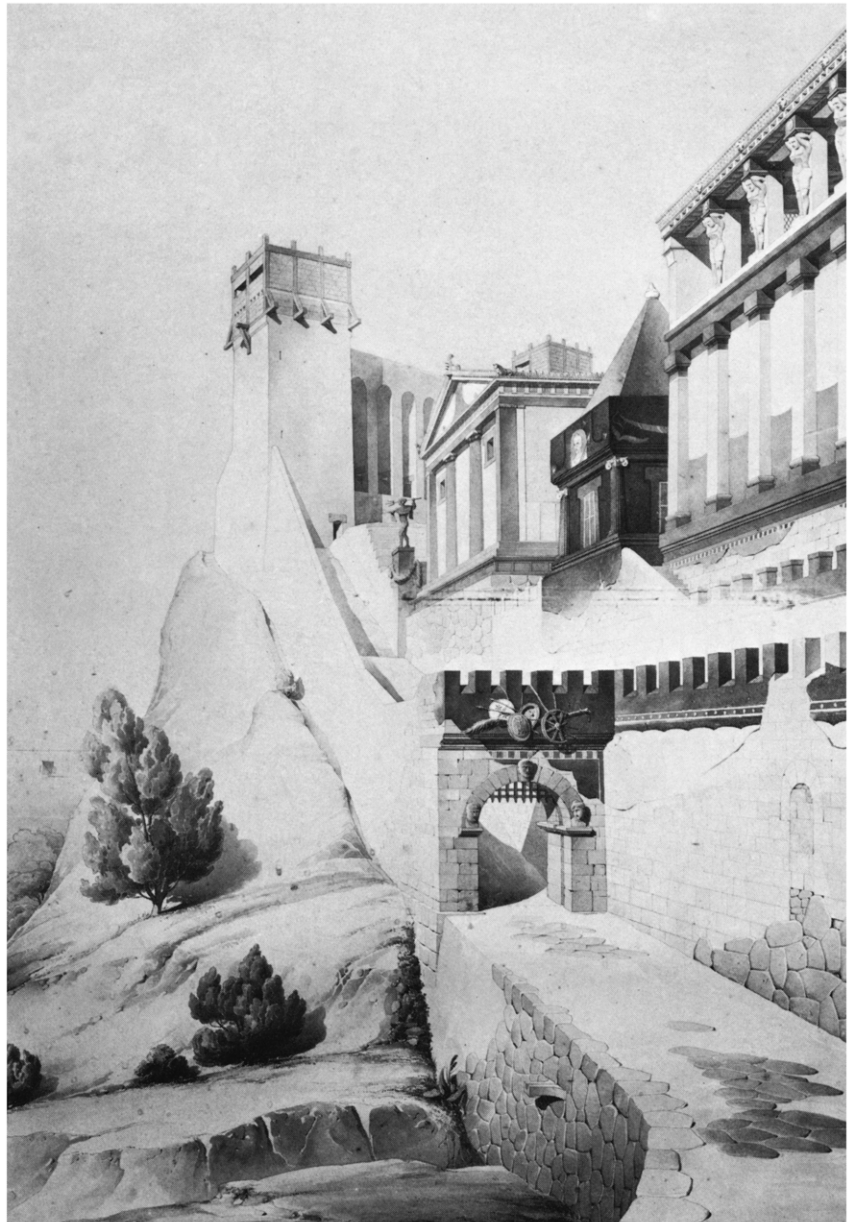
institutions; and on January 25, 1831, the Commission des Beaux-Arts was created by the government to project reforms. Among its members were Labrouste, Duban, and Blouet (as well as Delacroix, Delaroche, and Scheffer). The *pensionnaires* were both excited and aware that from the start the Académie would refuse to acknowledge the commission's authority. In the same letter that Vaudoyer informed his father of his choice of a *beffroi* as an *envoi*, he also blustered, "If the Institut continues to press forward on the absurd course it follows today, I will declare myself in open opposition to it . . . and this opposition will grow so much that it will eventually overthrow this body if it does not desist, just as the Liberal opposition overthrew Charles X."⁸⁷ But the Académie did not cede. When the Commission des Beaux-Arts made its report on October 31, 1831, that body refused to respond and by obstinacy (helped by governmental lethargy) rendered it a dead letter. Years later, in 1862, Viollet-le-Duc wrote of the Académie, "It has not had its revolution, poor devil, and it must have it, it will have it, I do not doubt . . . but we will probably not see it in our own time. . . . We need a 1792."⁸⁸

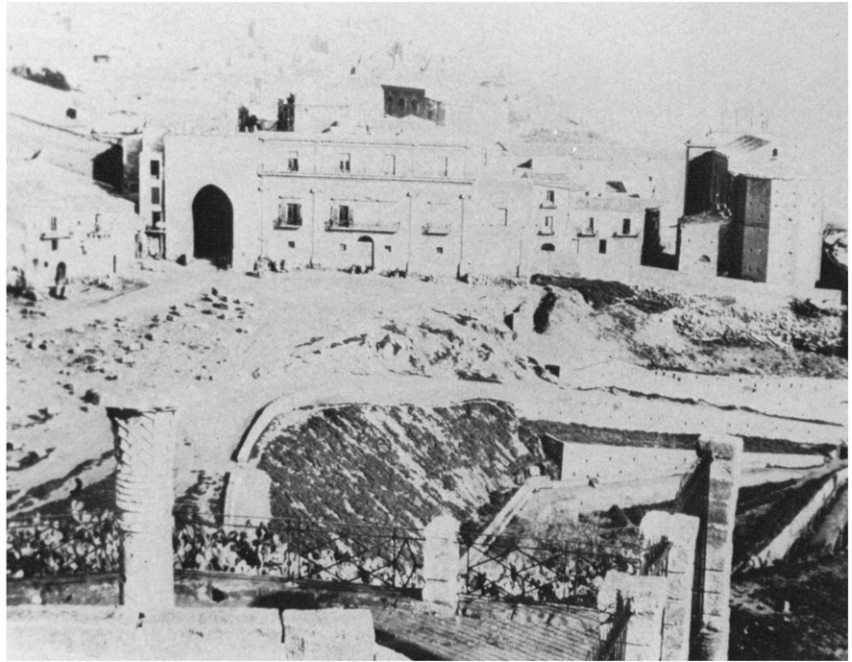
Until recently the Labrouste family kept on the wall a framed watercolor inscribed on the back, "Agrigentum. 1828" (figure 12). It shows a fortified Greek hill town with terraces above a gateway, a temple, a tomb, and perhaps a palace (from left to right), all garishly painted and, in the case of the city gate, decked with battlefield litter to frighten any potential enemy. The first thing one realizes is that this was the real source for the teasing *envois* of Théodore Labrouste and Delannoy (figures 4, 5), not the comparatively restrained section drawing of the Basilica at Paestum (figure 3). One also notices that this model is fiercer and more profound than its imitations. It is not an archaeological reconstruction at all; and despite its subscription, it does not represent any of the six celebrated temples commanding the ridge of ancient Agrigentum. What it shows instead is a jumble of construction quite like the nineteenth-century town of Grigenti, which clung to another less dramatic ridge inland to the north (figure 13). Labrouste, as he did in his Paestum series, has projected back into the past from the real, undignified experience of the site itself with a ragged, humble life still warm within it. He has been blind to "the Roman magnificence, which one would love to see," as Quatremère remarked of Delannoy's *envoi*.⁸⁹

The most striking and peculiar quality in Labrouste's "Agrigentum," however, is that the style of rendering itself is primitive and naive. The scale is wrong; the perspective is exaggerated; the lines are too sharp; the colors are too intense—it exists in an eerie "airless space" (to use Neil Levine's phrase). Duban had also begun executing watercolor fantasies in Rome and continued to do so far into the 1850s, to considerable public

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Henri Labrouste, "Agrigentum,"
imaginary reconstruction of an
ancient Greek city, dated 1828.
Académie d'Architecture, Paris.



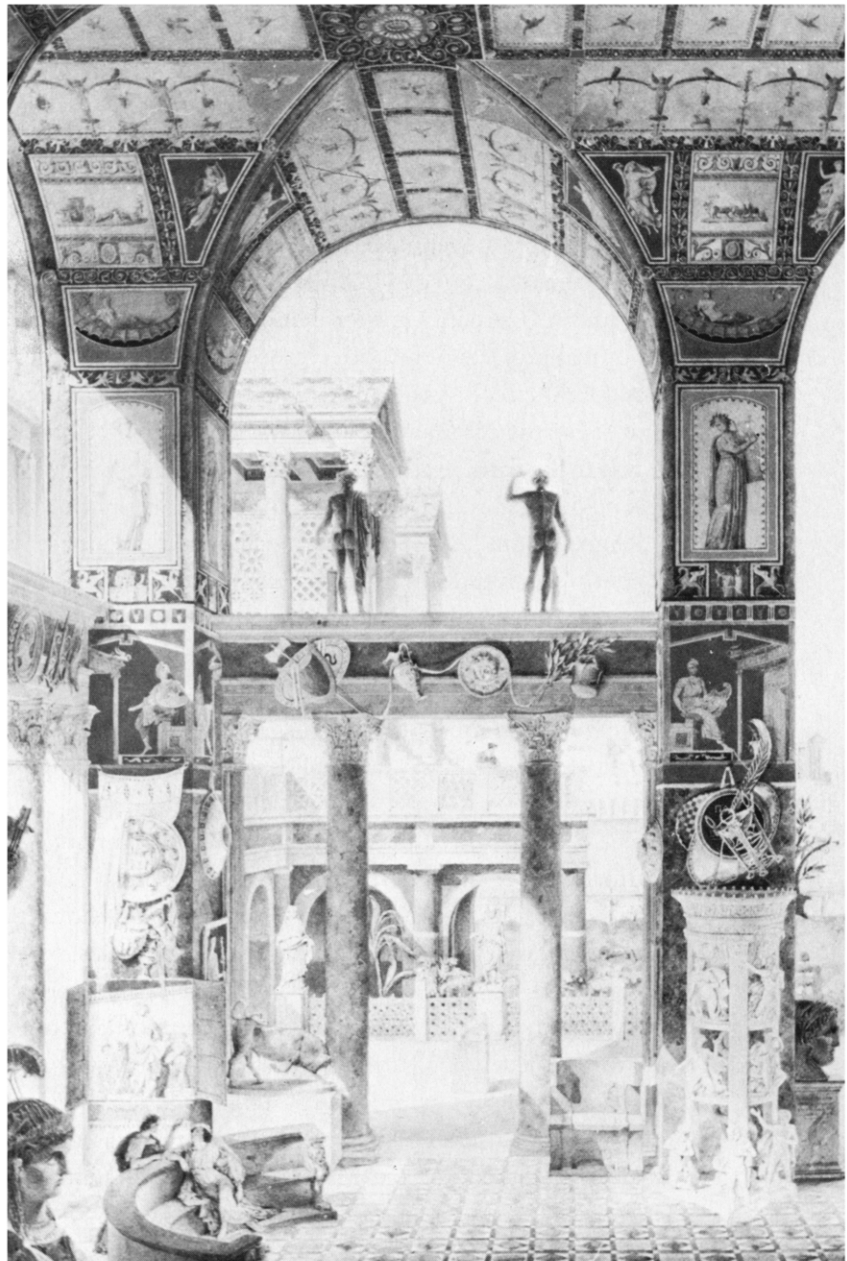


13

*Nineteenth-century view of
Grigenti, Sicily. (Photo courtesy
Northwestern University)*

14

Félix Duban, "Baja," architectural
fantasy, dated 1835. Musée
Vivenel, Compiègne.

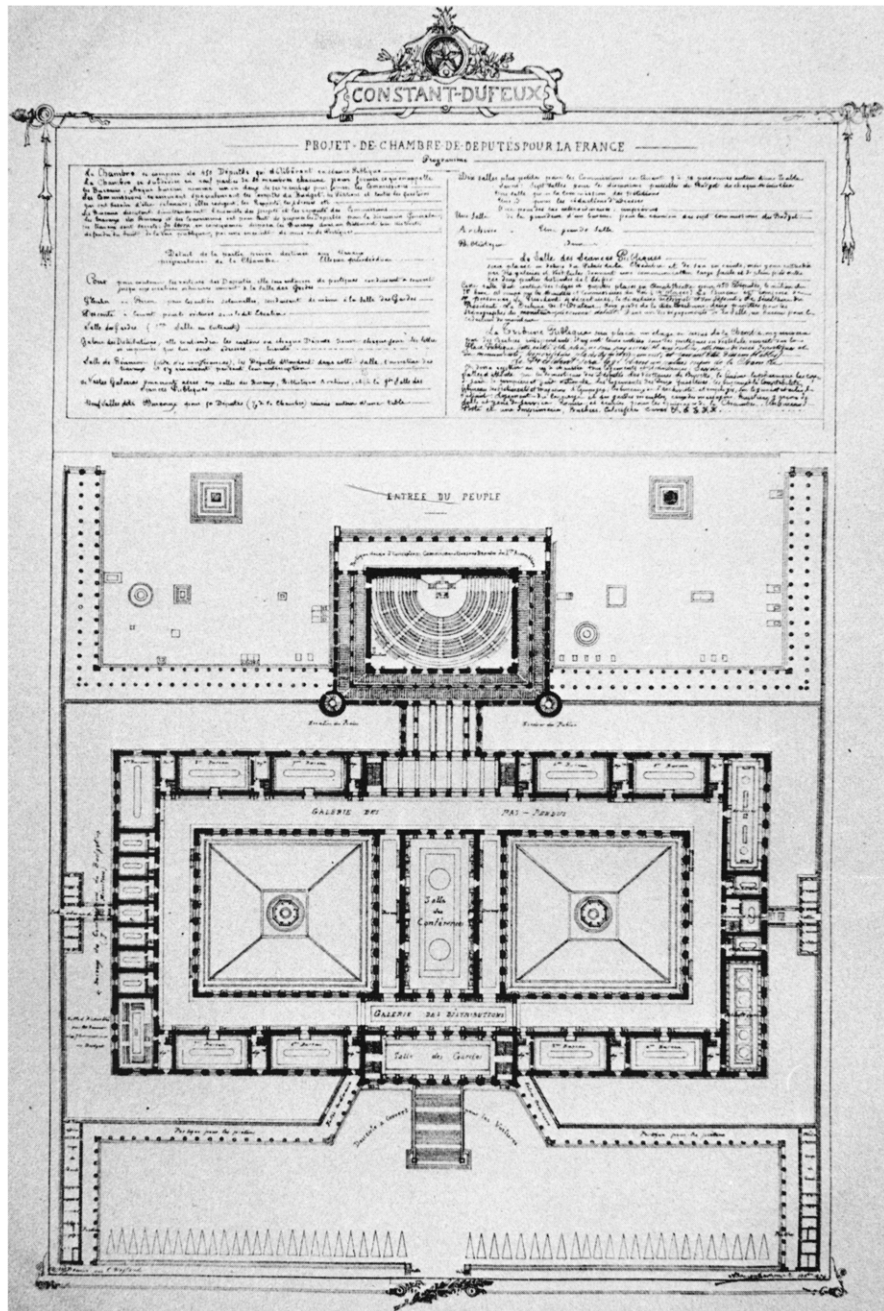


acknowledgment, but his are realistic reconstructions of ancient and Renaissance monuments that invite one to walk directly into them (figure 14).⁹⁰ Labrouste's fantasy, by contrast, is just that: something "other" that carries the mind across a threshold into a different world. His sketchbooks from his years in Rome are filled with drawings of naive, out-of-scale, unperspectival architectural backgrounds extracted from Pompeiian and quattrocento frescoes. They embodied a way of seeing that he was trying to study and that here, in the "Agrigentum," he reproduces.

Labrouste's "Agrigentum" is a pure fantasy and as such brings out a quality underlying the more constrained official *envois*: they were not serious building designs but rather conceptual gestures. It was a pretense of the *envois* that practice in archaeological reconstruction would increase the designer's knowledge of canonical form and that the fifth-year exercise in composition might sharpen his practical ability. But neither the academicians nor the *pensionnaires* had the slightest intention that these designs be erected. If you were one of the Romantic *pensionnaires* who had ceased to believe in the conventional worth of these exercises, what could you use them for? Certainly not for demonstrating a "new style" since they were not real projects—they offered no field to check expressive proportions and light effects; you could not calculate the thrusts or finger the moldings or savor the color and grain of the masonry. The only thing you could do was make them gestures, either political, like Vaudoyer's *beffroi*, or personal like Labrouste's Paestum, *pont frontière*, and "Agrigentum." The "Agrigentum" is Labrouste's musing on the hodge-podge town of Grigenti, which transforms itself back into Periclean times before his mind's eye. Labrouste alone among the *pensionnaires* is personal, rather than political and programmatic. The result is that only in his work are things unresolved but continuously resolving. We shall see in the final chapter how he came back to the "Agrigentum" in his last, greatest design, that of the Salle des Imprimés at the Bibliothèque Nationale (figure 84).

The culmination of the fifth-year *envois*—intentionally so—was the penultimate one of the series, the *chambre des députés* of Constant-Dufeux of 1834 (figures 15–17).⁹¹ In subject, it continues the political thread of Duban's and Vaudoyer's *envois*, but with greater emphasis. In composition, it develops the boxy reticence of these earlier designs, but now at large scale and with perverse elaboration. In its use of ornament it applies the accretive, incidental decoration suggested in Labrouste's Paestum basilica reconstruction and its progeny among the fourth-year *envois*.

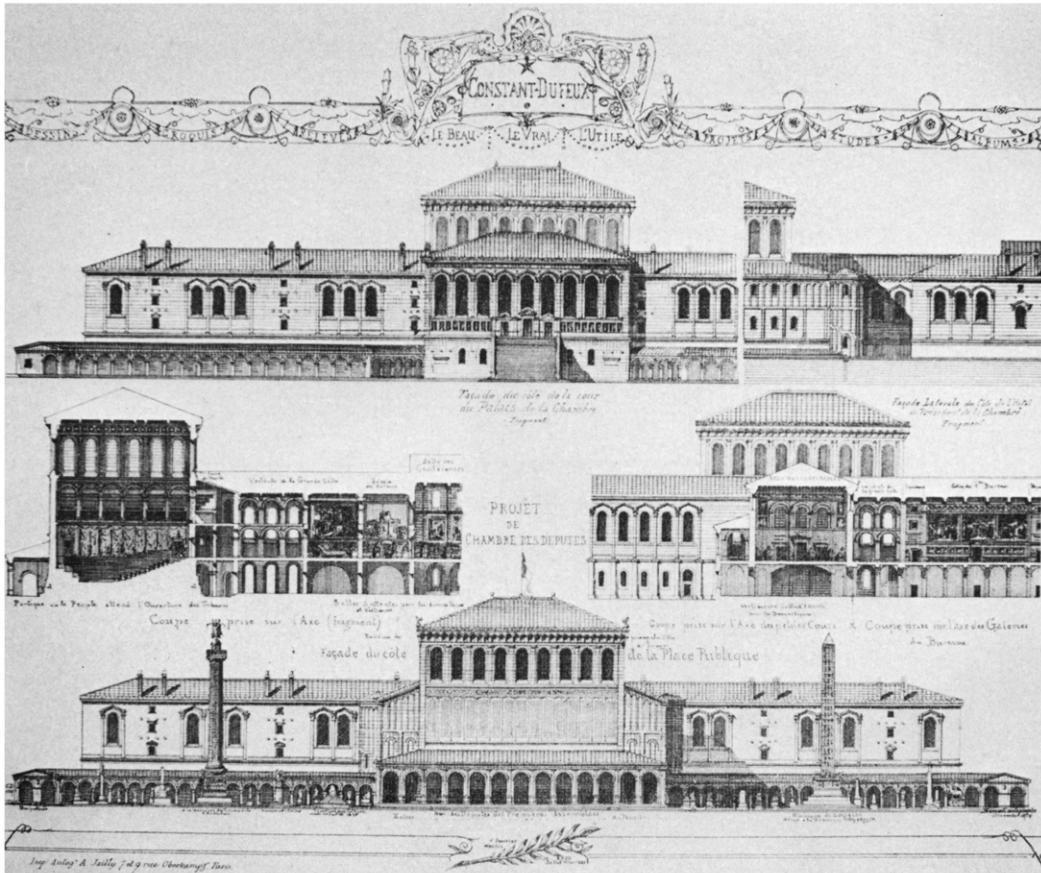
It is not surprising that such a cumulative statement of the *pensionnaires'* ideas should come from this hand. Constant-Dufeux was as old as Labrouste and, upon his arrival in Rome in late 1829, the most successful of all the *pensionnaires*. While still a student at the Ecole he had designed



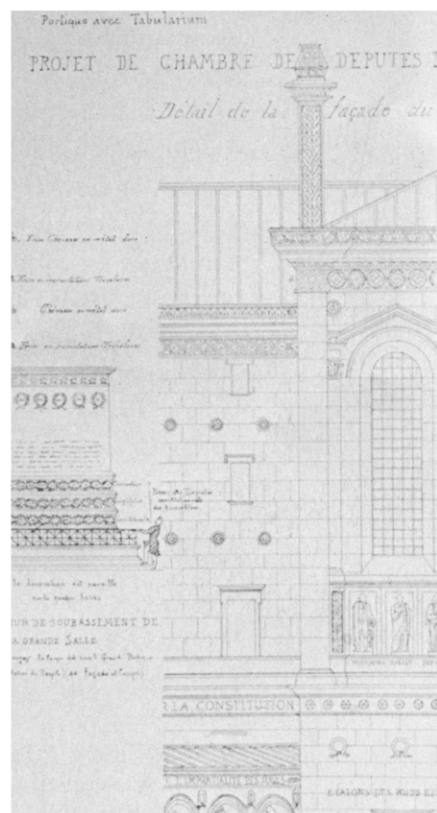
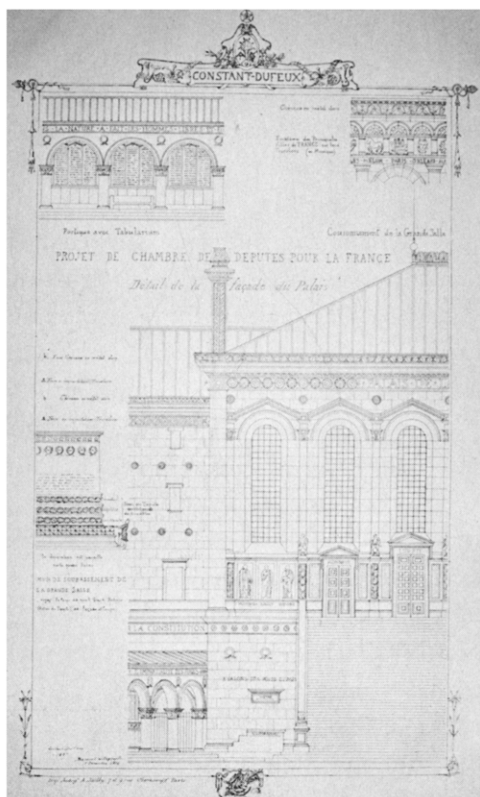
15

Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux,
Chambre des députés, plan.

Fifth-year envoi, 1834–35. Re-
drawn and published lithographi-
cally by A. Joilly, Paris, 1872–75.



16
 Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux,
 Chambre des députés, elevations.
 Fifth-year envoi, 1834–35. Re-
 drawn and published lithographi-
 cally by A. Joilly, Paris, 1872–75.



17

Simon-Claude Constant-Dufeux, Chambre des députés, details. Fifth-year envoi, 1834–35. Redrawn and published lithographically by A. Joilly, Paris, 1872–75.

important work at the canals Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin and had projected the Galerie Colbert for the architect Billaud and the Fontaine Gailon for Visconti—this last the finest piece of Restoration decoration not from the hand of Percier.⁹² He is said to have had eight million francs of work on hand when he won the Grand Prix. Upon his return to Paris, he established himself as the principal ornamentalist of the group—Labrousse's competitor as the originator of the Néo-Grec mode. But the great opportunities he had received before going to Rome did not again present themselves, apparently in part because of the reputation for radicality he had cultivated with his *envois*, and he never built a major public structure.

Constant-Dufeux's *chambre des députés* was obviously conceived with the existing building, erected by Bernard Poyet (1742–1824) in 1806–10, in mind (figure 18).⁹³ The first thing evident in comparing the two facades is that the monumental columnar temple front that constitutes the whole elevation of the Napoleonic building has, in a sense, slipped down Constant-Dufeux's facade to become a series of short Doric half-columns embedded in a low, arcaded portico. The majestic file of statuesque shafts topping a high cascade of steps has been transformed into a functional cloister set at street level to keep rain off visitors arriving at the building. And as that colonnade has slipped down, it has revealed the blank, boxy volume of the chamber itself; the exposed surface bears a lengthy inscription headed "CHARTRE CONSTITUTIONELLE." The chamber's walls are pierced with a ring of large arched windows and crowned with a corbelled cornice enframing painted porcelain plaques bearing the arms of all the cities of France. The roof is a tall, hipped covering built to cast off the rains and snows of the North; the windows are expansive to admit an ample flow of the feeble Northern light.

Behind the chamber rises a second larger, less open and decorated volume divided into suites of committee rooms. Constant-Dufeux rephrased and regularized the 1830 constitution of France as his program, and this layout is its consequence. It divides the legislative process into a public, deliberative function and a private, analytical one carried on by committees in secret.⁹⁴ The chamber enclosing the deliberative function faces outward; porcelain emblems of the cities of the nation sparkle around its crown, the constitution rests on its brow, a cloister opening upon a public square filled with political memorials sits at its foot. This last includes a column "à la mémoire des victimes de la Révolution," the Monument Desaix, a "Sepulture aux citoyens mort en juillet, 1830," the obelisk of Luxor (set up in the Place de la Concorde in 1836), and is surrounded on three sides by a "tabularium" of written inscriptions. The private committee block of the structure faces inward, away from this square, with a private members' entry at the back.

In the public square or in the cloister around it, the public might wait



18

*Bernard Poyet, Chambre des
Députés, Paris 1806–10.*

for the opening of the session, then flow into the building through the broad corridors surrounding the chamber and climb the spiral staircases to the two tiers of galleries. The inner wall of this annular corridor steps forward in a series of four tall benches. In a detail sketch, Constant-Dufeux shows that these benches are decorative bands inscribed with all the names of the deputies of the Constituent Assembly, the Legislative Assembly, and the Convention—the three original Revolutionary legislatures of France. The chamber literally, physically rests upon the memory of the Revolution and of the first representatives of the people. Constant-Dufeux's building thus embodies the history and organization of a French Republican government, as a Gothic cathedral once embodied that of the Christian doctrine: in its pattern of volumes it states the structure of the political system; in its decorative dress it communicates its spirit. Founded upon the legislators of the Revolution, its constitution is open for all to read, while the names and history of its people gather about it in memorial and increase year by year.

In an important sense Constant-Dufeux's monument is a manifestation of and the key to everything going on in the *pensionnaires'* minds. Labrousse's basilica at Paestum, Duban's *temple protestant*, and this *chambre des députés* were all public assembly halls. They were simple boxes in plan and structure, but they were potentially the type of modern democratic architecture. Already in 1836 Vaudoyer had ended his entry "Basilique" in the second volume of the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, "It seems to us that the activities of a government based on national representation, on public discussion of certain matters, and on the election of magistrates will bring about the creation of a new edifice, the function of which might have some relation to that of the ancient basilica."⁹⁵ Writing in César Daly's *Revue générale de l'architecture* in 1846–47, Constant-Dufeux himself was more categorical:

*Today when every capital, every city, even the smallest village, must have their assembly halls, why do we not seek here the motif for a new architecture? Why do we not make these buildings the object of particular study and research, in order to constitute a new type, because they are now so important and new as well? . . . Will we be powerless to conceive an architecture représentative?*⁹⁶

He continues, making specific suggestions about procedure:

Have more confidence in our institutions and in our future, and especially have more confidence in ourselves. Consider that in order to make good architecture, it is necessary first to imagine the layout of spaces and the method of construction, without any preoccupation with style, having in view only the satisfaction of material and moral needs, as generally as will permit a prudent economy

of the means at our disposal. *This first operation of the spirit, which we call the ART OF BUILDING, should be followed by that which constitutes what we call the ART OF SCULPTING, that is, the art of conceiving and of giving to the work the most appropriate and expressive form, so that the work may finally receive the ART OF PAINTING, the indispensable complement for perfecting the work so that it is worthy of being called a monument of art.*⁹⁷

The architect, the *pensionnaires* seem to have agreed, is the student and servant of his society. His responsibility is to house and make expressive its primary institutions, which around 1830 meant the public assembly hall. The architect's method is to study this problem functionally and historically, to distinguish an abstract, practical core, and then to dress it up with an accretive, meaningful decoration.⁹⁸

Two

THE FORMULATION OF THE APPROACH:
THE THEORY OF
REYNAUD, FORTOUL, AND VAUDOYER

Between 1829 and 1832 Duban, Labrouste, Duc, and Vaudoyer all arrived back in Paris. Within their narrow circle upon their return were several thinkers and writers who formulated a concept of architecture that articulates their basic concerns. It was a clear, if limited, concept, which pre-dates and informs the design of most of their buildings. This particular group embraced Duban, Duc, and Vaudoyer as well as the architect Léonce Reynaud, his brother the engineer and philosopher Jean Reynaud, and the critic Hippolyte Fortoul. Labrouste was conspicuously absent.

Léonce Reynaud (1803–80) had been trained at the Ecole Polytechnique (from which he was dismissed in 1822 for Carbonarism, falsely alleged but as a result enthusiastically embraced) and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts from 1825 to 1829 in the atelier of Huyot.¹ After a trip to Italy, he settled in Paris, where from 1833 he worked in the administration of the Ponts et Chaussées while pursuing theoretical matters with his brother's friends, Fortoul, Edouard Charton, Pierre Leroux, and Sainte-Beuve. In 1834–39 he erected the lighthouse at Heaux de Bréliat, and in 1843–47 he designed and erected the Gare du Nord, the first monumental railroad station in Paris. He was appointed Professor of Architecture at the Ecole Polytechnique in 1837.

Reynaud's younger brother, Jean (1806–63),² also studied at the Ecole Polytechnique, where he met the Saint-Simonian Prosper Enfantin, and later at the Ecole des Mines, where he became close to Michel Chevalier and Charles-Joseph Lambert. He traveled with Chevalier in the summer of 1828 and subsequently became an adherent to his Saint-Simonianism. Indeed, during 1829 and 1830, he was an itinerant proselytizer. After the Revolution of 1830 he became involved in the sect's publishing efforts, first on the *Revue encyclopédique*, then from 1833 as editor, with Pierre Leroux, of the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, which engaged him until 1848. When Hippolyte Carnot was appointed Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et des Cultes in the first provisional government of the Second Republic, Rey-

naud and Edouard Charton were each named Secrétaire Général. Reynaud also lectured at the Ecole des Mines and served in the Constituant Assembly. He lost his post in the administration upon Carnot's ouster in July, however, and finally had to flee to Nice after Napoleon III's coup d'état of December 2, 1851. Thereafter he occupied himself with emigré Republican agitation and philosophical writing, and in 1854 published a well-known volume, *Terre et Ciel*.

Fortoul (1811–56), born in Digne near the Alps north of Aix, worked as a critic in Paris from 1830 until his appointment as Professor of French Literature at the University of Toulouse in 1841.³ In 1842 he summarized his ideas in an important volume, *De l'Art en Allemagne*, and in 1846 he was made dean of the Faculty of Letters at Aix. A meteoric and controversial political career began in 1849 with his election as a deputy, followed by his appointment as Louis Napoleon's Ministre de la Marine before the coup d'état, which he helped to arrange. On December 3, 1851, he was appointed Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et des Cultes specifically to tighten state control over the professoriate and priesthood. His old friends Léonce Reynaud, Carnot, and Charton had already noted suspicious tendencies when he returned to Paris after the revolution, and by 1851 Fortoul was firmly in what had come to be the anti-Republican, enemy camp, along with certain other Saint-Simonians like Michel Chevalier. Nonetheless, in his ministerial position he was well placed to help his old friends the *pensionnaires* (Vaudoier, for one, did not hesitate to ask his aid⁴) and passed on to them a series of major commissions before dying of a heart attack in 1856 at age forty-five. His importance to them in the 1830s, however, was as a link to the mainstream of the new philosophical history represented by his friend Edgar Quinet and Quinet's mentor, Victor Cousin.

The Reynauds and Fortoul were all Saint-Simonians around 1830, but subscribed to the nonceremonial doctrine summarized in the *Exposition générale de la doctrine Saint-Simonienne* by Carnot.⁵ (Vaudoier appears to have been sympathetic to the movement as well.) They were among the dissidents who abandoned the sect upon Enfantin's assumption of leadership in 1831, but they remained faithful to the movement's basic tenants: the inevitability of evolution and progress in all human institutions; the primacy of science and industry in the modern age; the need for society to reorganize itself in response to these developments.

The pivot of the group seems to have been the encyclopedia project. In 1833 Jean Reynaud and Pierre Leroux commenced work on the *Encyclopédie pittoresque* (later *nouvelle*) in belated response to Saint-Simon's request for a new encyclopedia to update Diderot's and to lay the foundation for the rational, scientific society of the future.⁶ Léonce Reynaud was assigned the architecture entries and he, in turn, solicited the aid of Vaudoier for volumes two (1835) and three (1836–37). This led to

Vaudoyer being asked to contribute his “Etudes d’architecture en France” to Charton’s *Magasin pittoresque*, beginning in 1839, and to Jean Aicard’s *Patria* of 1846, while Léonce Reynaud expanded his ideas into the course he taught at the Ecole Polytechnique from 1837 and published as his *Traité d’architecture* (1850–58), which became the principal architectural treatise of mid-century France.

Fortoul, one of the *Encyclopédie*’s major contributors, had been praising the *pensionnaires*’ work in his critical pieces⁷ and by 1837, if not earlier, had become personally friendly with them. In that year he traveled to England with Vaudoyer,⁸ and by 1838 Duc and Vaudoyer were planning a trip with him on the Versailles railroad. Duban, through Vaudoyer, invited Fortoul to visit the recently completed Hôtel Pourtalès with him.⁹ On May 19, 1839, Vaudoyer wrote Charton:

Tomorrow Wednesday we dine with Duban Duc Reynaud and one of our friends Boullée who is now at Paris. It would be very kind of you to join us along with Fortoul. . . . It is a picnic. . . .

*I forgot to tell you that tomorrow we are going to visit Duc’s column. The rendezvous is at 2:30 at his home, rue du Marché St. Honoré 4.*¹⁰

Later that year Vaudoyer and Fortoul traveled to Laon, Rheims, and Beauvais together; and from August 15 to September 24, 1840, they made a study trip through Germany, which both of them depicted later as a profound experience.¹¹ Fortoul then went off to Toulouse, but kept up a steady correspondence with Vaudoyer,¹² who wrote with regret on April 18, 1842: “No more fine morning discussions in the midst of blue cigarette smoke! No longer any hope of finding ourselves united around a bottle of Curaçao.”¹³ In 1845 he summarized the news of Duban, Duc, and Reynaud: “Duban continues his Sainte-Chapelle and is beginning his château at Blois, Duc is beginning this year his Palais de Justice, and Reynaud will finish his station for the Chemin de Fer du Nord.”¹⁴ But, most important for our purposes, Vaudoyer wrote Fortoul about their shared conception of architecture:

*I cannot conceive of a trip without you. Let us see each other frequently to mature our common ideas about art in general and architecture in particular.*¹⁵

*You must not doubt the number of occasions on which I have been called upon to defend the doctrines which I share [with you].*¹⁶

*One [article by Vaudoyer in the Magasin pittoresque] has appeared . . . on Renaissance architecture in which you will find a great number of the ideas we share, unfortunately expressed in a very vulgar form.*¹⁷

*When will you return to Paris, and when can we take up again the question of the orders posed in the square at Bamberg?*¹⁸

These letters open a kind of window into the minds of at least some of the *pensionnaires* upon their return to Paris.

This small, tight circle of artists and writers produced a “doctrine” (to use Vaudoyer’s term) during the 1830s. Léonce Reynaud led off with his contributions to the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, most particularly in the entry “Architecture,” written in 1833 and published in 1834.¹⁹ In the first paragraphs of this essay, Reynaud declares that architecture is the shell and visible embodiment of social institutions and that its construction becomes more efficient as man’s knowledge advances with time.²⁰ Furthermore, he states, this is the basis of architectural expression; for a building to be beautiful it must physically manifest the institution it contains as well as the technical knowledge of its creators.

It was the principle of Neoclassicism that mere construction is aesthetically mute and that expression comes through a decorative veil of the Greek Orders laid over the functional surfaces. In his basic entry “Architecture” in his *Architecture* (published in the *Encyclopédie méthodique* in 1788), Quatremère de Quincy denies that architecture is merely “l’art de bâtir” and defines it instead as “the art of building following proportions and rules determined and set by Nature and taste.”²¹ He goes on to depict the Orders as “natural” because they are based on primitive wooden construction and defends the translation of that wooden prototype into stone: *Do not doubt it: it is by fortuitous illusionism that man enjoys the pleasure of imitation in architecture, without which there would not be that pleasure which accompanies all the arts and is their charm, the pleasure of being partially deceived, which makes romances and poetry so treasured, makes veiled truth preferable to naked truth.*²²

Reynaud answers this most pointedly in his entry “Colonne” in volume three of the *Encyclopédie nouvelle* (1836–37).²³ He begins by quoting both Vitruvius’s and Quatremère’s definitions of the column as a fixed form, taken over from the mythical primitive hut, uninflected by its actual material or function. Reynaud then points out that the arrangement of the shaft and capital make no sense in terms of wooden construction, and he shows that their entasis and profiles, in fact, respond to the exigencies of stone building. In a word, he proves that the Greek Orders were not works of ideal sculpture but rather examples of practical construction, yet no less elegant for their structural efficiency. Indeed, he asserts that their beauty lies in that efficiency. The column imitates the human body, he concludes, in that it is just as neatly and simply made: “Just as, in the case of the

human body, nothing capricious or extraneous strikes the eye, so in [Greek] constructions, and especially in columns, nothing is admitted that cannot be legitimated by reason and that does not carry the mark of utility.”²⁴ In this sense the column does indeed recall the human body and has symbolic force—although what is symbolized is not man individually, but the pervasive structural principle of nature into which he is subsumed. The issue, Reynaud writes, is simply whether art reproduces nature’s forms or nature’s laws, “whether art should derive its effects from the imitation of forms, or whether it should seek them in the observation of the diverse conditions imposed by the means of realization and by the proprieties it is necessary to satisfy; in a word, whether art demands material models or principles for creativity.”²⁵

Reynaud and his friends did not deny that architectural beauty has a mathematical basis, but they perceived that basis differently. They concluded that these mathematics were founded not on aesthetic proportions but on the scientific laws of structural statics; by extension, therefore, as structural knowledge advances and constructive systems evolve, so do the canons of mathematical beauty.²⁶ Every culture has a distinct canon based on its particular level of scientific knowledge. Beauty lies not in a form, static and unchanging through ages, but in a principle that manifests itself progressively and differently in each epoch.

The historical development of architecture was very simple to Quatremère de Quincy. Architecture is synonymous with the Greek Orders: these were its expressive organs. The Greeks discovered the Orders; the Romans perfected them; the Middle Ages forgot them; the Renaissance rediscovered them. There was a Golden Age, then a fall, and now an effort to recreate that Golden Age. The task of the modern architect is to reproduce the ancient Orders as accurately as possible; there has been no change or progress in architecture’s ideal. Quatremère ends the entry “Moderne” in his 1832 *Dictionnaire historique d’architecture*: “We have established in this whole work that our architecture is that of the Greeks and the Romans, in a word, ancient architecture.”²⁷

To Reynaud, Vaudoyer, and Fortoul, the history of architecture was far more complex. They saw it evolving step by step, each step a continuation and inflection of the preceding one. The forces that drew it on were social and philosophical; it was the shell of human society in evolution. Thus what they felt to be important was the extrapolated trace of architecture’s development, the abstract inner principles that its changes delineated, not its specific external forms. Consequently most of their writings are historical, analyzing how these principles were spun out in time.

They associate the arch and its geometric principle, the curve, with Christian culture and the post and lintel and its principle, the right angle, with Greco-Roman society. Thus they explain the application of the grid

of the Orders over Roman arcaded facades as the expression of Greco-Roman humanism, while they see the freeing of the arch—set on top of columns, not within them, beginning in the Constantinian era—as the manifestation of the Christian sense of religious infinity. They see the Renaissance as a new, distinct era, not one in which antiquity was recreated, but one in which a synthesis of the rational principle of Greco-Roman culture was married with the Christian sense of infinity. That synthesis, however, was incomplete; it became unstuck when seventeenth-century academicism resurrected the Roman solution of imposing the Orders over arcaded surfaces. A real synthesis would be the imposition of order on medieval arched architecture in its own curvilinear terms. This has not yet been achieved; it is the modern architect's task to accomplish it and thereby correct the Renaissance.²⁸

This is a new reading of architectural history. It celebrates styles formerly denigrated. It combines eras formerly held to be distinct and distinguishes eras formerly seen as homogeneous. Finally, it presents as the great monument of modern building a structure customarily overlooked: the Duomo in Florence.

The core of this reading is the emphasis on Christian medieval architecture and the conception of it as a single style merely inflected to become the Byzantine, Romanesque, or Gothic. Reynaud and Vaudoyer point out that the pointed arch, held to be the distinctive mark of the Gothic, is but a natural outcome of ribbed vaulting, evolving slowly out of the Romanesque as that style developed. The key is thinking in terms of principles instead of forms, as Vaudoyer explains in an essay of 1839, interjected into the narrative of his “*Etudes d’architecture en France*.” “It is necessary to establish a distinction between the *forme ogival* and the *style ogival*; that is, between the pointed arch considered as a form by itself and the pointed arch as constituting a whole system of architecture.”²⁹ Vaudoyer argues that one can find the form anywhere—India, Persia, Mexico—evidently thinking of such authors as Hittorff, who in 1835 insisted upon the Islamic origin of the pointed arch.³⁰ But the structural system was clearly nothing but a refinement of the Romanesque. All medieval building was but variations on curved arch and vault forms and could be subsumed under the heading “style curviligne.”³¹ In Western architecture the Romanesque was the basic mode: “truly the primordial type of Christian architecture in France.”³²

In this manner, Reynaud, Vaudoyer, and Fortoul perceived that Gothic architecture was not only a perfect expression of Christian mysticism, but also a structural advance over Roman building. “Never,” Reynaud wrote in 1834,

had religious monuments received a character more complete and appropriate; never had they been more wholly identified with the sentiments to which they were to

*testify; never had they better summarized and made more comprehensible all the poetry of their epoch; and never also had spaces so wide and so high been erected with so few and such light supports. Art and science had progressed together; they had supported each other; and the scientist and the artist both were satisfied at the sight of these admirable creations.*³³

As they conceptually drew the medieval styles together, Reynaud and his friends revised the standard reading of the style's origin and demise. The acceptance of the arch and vault as forms in themselves became a momentous revolution. Vaudoyer gave it a name: "l'affranchissement de l'arcade," the emancipation of the arch.

We attach the greatest importance to this event, the emancipation of the arch: because it is by this, in our opinion, that one may explain naturally the formation of Byzantine art, of Arab art, of Roman art, and of Gothic art, and in so doing deduce the principles in the name of which commenced the protestations of the Renaissance.

In taking the ancient basilicas as the model for their first temples, the Christians did not copy the treatment of the Orders. Either because they derived from the constructions of the Late Empire the example of a new system, as one might suppose in examining the ruins of the palace at Spalato; or because they were led to it practically by a different method of construction; or because they possessed within themselves the instinct for a new form giving a distinct physiognomy to the Christian temple, it is a fact that they used columns as the supports for the arches which they substituted for the monolithic lintels of pagan antiquity. At first these columns originated from ancient monuments and were such as had been designed to carry architraves; but soon they felt the need to modify the proportions and to substitute a new form of capital more appropriate to their new function; then later the system of constructing arches, which had been applied in principle only to join isolated points of support, was generalized and gave birth to an embracing system of vaulting. So it is that Byzantine art was engendered while Italy was faithfully preserving its first Latin basilicas, the layout of which she was later to transmit to the West.

It seems to me that in this architecture, thus constituted of completely new elements, one must first coordinate elements and fix principles so as to establish rhythms totally different from pagan rhythms; but this was not the case, and in adopting this architecture, which would be called upon to become the expression of

*Christian spiritualism, these medieval artists seem to have paid little attention to everything that might seem a consecration of a material form, and they concentrated simply on the conditions necessary for the stability of their works.*³⁴

The end of the medieval style was for Reynaud and his friends a more complex event, and a more momentous one since it gave birth to modern architecture. It did not come with the rediscovery and accurate reproduction of the Orders in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as Quatremère insisted. On the contrary, that was a false turning, a byway in the evolution of architecture. For them the Renaissance in building coincided with that in literature and painting—with Petrarch and Giotto—and began with Arnolfo di Cambio's projection of the Duomo in Florence in 1293–94 as a domical structure announced at the west by a four-bay nave vaulted like the Basilica of Constantine. Retaining a traditional medieval layout, it reintroduced Greco-Roman volumetric elements and proportions, but not the Orders as forms in themselves. It developed a spacious structural organism, broader and more efficient than the Gothic, which was exposed to view as swelling volumes unencumbered by spires and flying buttresses. Reynaud wrote in 1834 of the Duomo and the structures of its time:

*These buildings still recalled Gothic structures; they had the same layout and the same proportions; all the considerations that determined them were frankly expressed, all the proprieties wisely satisfied. These were still Gothic buildings, but with more harmonious forms, purer and more gracious contours, and covered, in a way, with a strange veil, a rich and diaphanous veil that decorated without concealing.*³⁵

Arnolfo, Vaudoyer explains in his “*Etudes d’architecture en France*,” combined in the Duomo the Roman thermal hall and the domical pyramid of the Byzantine church. In so doing he opened interior spaces further than in the Gothic cathedral and encumbered them with fewer supports because loads and thrusts were carried to earth diagonally, within the walls and piers themselves. Brunelleschi, a century after Arnolfo laid out the Duomo, managed to vault its vast east end. He did so, according to Reynaud, through his knowledge of science and through his discovery of the principles of Roman construction. His accomplishment was to understand that structure and form are one: “in his way of seeing, form should be the natural consequence of the necessities of construction; the *beau* could only be the manifestation of the *bien*.”³⁶ Here Brunelleschi established the Renaissance ideal in his art. “It was thus a new principle for his epoch that Brunelleschi felt called upon to proclaim; this was, in architecture, to depend first of all on intelligence and to rehabilitate the imperceptible laws of nature.”³⁷ The building Arnolfo and Brunelleschi produced has not been

equalled since. It is the paradigm the later architects of the Renaissance should have developed more faithfully and to which the modern architect should now return: “The key work (*l’oeuvre capitale*) of Renaissance architecture, we are almost tempted to say, of the architecture of modern times.”³⁸

In his *Dictionnaire historique d’architecture* Quatremère speaks well of Brunelleschi (while presenting himself as a bit of a pioneer in so doing at all) but expresses disappointment that he did not emphasize the Orders in his work.³⁹ That, of course, is just what Reynaud and his friends admired in Brunelleschi: his ability to extract the principles of Roman construction and proportion without the details of Roman form. But, Reynaud wrote in 1834, the idea of learning from Rome had now been broached, and after Brunelleschi it was pressed “jusqu’à dans ses dernières conséquences.”

*After having borrowed some of the motifs from the monuments of antiquity, one tried to imitate the relationships and the arrangement of these details, and in the end one considered these monuments to be absolute types of beauty. . . . Architecture became something mysterious and fated, which had unchanging rules and prescriptions and which imposed them fixedly. . . . It was thus that one saw open porticos, flat roofs and small windows introduced among us in place of the closed porticos, pointed roofs, and the broad windows of the middle ages. . . . Finally, during the last few years, we have dressed up our churches, our stock exchanges, our theaters, our customs houses, and even our guardhouses as ancient temples. Strangely enough, this was precisely the moment when one removed all character from architecture, all truth, all expressiveness, that is, everything that made it an art; it was at this moment that one wished to see here only an art of the imagination and one repulsed most vigorously any scientific or industrial influence. . . . Thus our modern buildings do not present the expression that belongs to art, nor the layouts demanded by our customs or climate, nor the solidity that our science would permit us to achieve. Far from representing our society in all its aspects, it does not represent it in so much as one.*⁴⁰

Fortoul sums up these ideas in a lengthy passage in a notebook he kept during the middle 1830s.⁴¹ He begins by asking: Since Quatremère defines beauty as residing in mathematical proportion, why cannot there be more than one system of such proportions? Why cannot the Gothic cathedral also be beautiful in this sense? (Quatremère contended that the Gothic was irregular and capricious, but during the 1820s researches such as those of Sulpiz Boisserée were elucidating its geometric basis.⁴²) Fortoul notes that he has “often dreamed of a new architecture that would be a vaster, more